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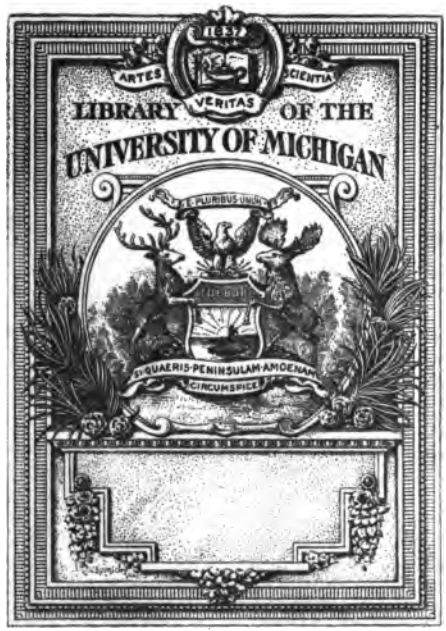
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MEMORIES AND STUDIES OF WAR AND PEACE.

BY

ARCHIBALD FORBES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

TAUCHNITZ EDITION.

By the same Author,

THE WAR BETWEEN FRANCE AND GERMANY . 2 vols.
SOLDIERING AND SCRIBBLING . . . . . 1 vol.

MEMORIES AND STUDIES

OF

WAR AND PEACE

BY

ARCHIBALD FORBES,

AUTHOR OF "THE WAR BETWEEN FRANCE AND GERMANY."

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IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

LEIPZIG

BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1895.

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TO THE REVERED AND BELOVED MEMORY

OF

GENERAL MONTGOMERY CUNNINGHAM MEIGS,

QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL OF THE ARMY OF THE

UNITED STATES FROM 1861 TO 1882,

HIS SON-IN-LAW INSCRIBES THIS BOOK.

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MEMORIES AND STUDIES

OF

WAR AND PEACE.

I.

TEN YEARS OF WAR CORRESPONDENCE.

Skobeleff under Fire.—The Ideal War Correspondent.—Old and New Methods of War Correspondence.—The Franco-German War.—Saarbrücken.—Gravelotte.—An Episode of the Entry into Paris.—The Starving Magistrate.—Malet in the Commune-time.—The Servian Campaign.—A Long Ride.—The Russo-Turkish War and its War Correspondence.—My Comrades.—The Crossing of the Danube.—Tzar Alexander II.—Life on Campaign.—Second Battle of Plevna, July 30th.—Fighting in the Schipka Pass.—My Interview with the Emperor.—His Return to St. Petersburg.—Telegraphy *in excelsis*.—King Theebau and his Presents.—Rough Surgery in Afghanistan.—Mentioned in Despatches.—Ulundi and the Zulu Valour.—A Long Gallop with the Tidings.

It was down by the Danube side, in the earlier days of the Russo-Turkish War. Skobeleff and myself were squatting in a hole in the ground, to escape the rain of bullets and shells which the Turks were pouring across the river on the detachment which the young general commanded.

"Here you and I are," said Skobeleff with a laugh, "like Uriah the Hittite, right in the forefront of the battle; and how strange it is that quiet stay-at-home folk all over the world, who take their morning papers just as they do their breakfasts, know ever so much more about this war as a whole than we fellows do, who are actually listening to the whistle of the bullets and the crash of the shells!"

Skobeleff did not pursue the subject further, because just then a shell exploded right in front of us, and of the mud which it threw up a splash hit him in the face and changed the current of his ideas; but all the same his remark was a very true one. War correspondence and the electric telegraph have for years given the peaceful citizen the advantage, in the matter of quick and wide war news, over the soldier who is looking the enemy in the face on the actual battlefield. But this intelligence, although the peaceful citizen takes little account of the manner of getting it, and has come to look for it as a thing of course—as a mere matter of everyday routine—yet reaches his breakfast-table as the outcome only of long thoughtful planning, of arduous physical and mental exertion, of hairbreadth risks encountered. It is my purpose in this chapter to tell something of the war correspondent's working life, something of the character of his exertions to satisfy the world's crave for the "latest intelligence from the seat of war," and something of the dangers that encompass the path of his duty. If the recital of some

bygone personal experiences in this field may strike the reader as involving the imputation of egotism, I would respectfully beg of him to admit the excuse that it is not easy for a man to avoid egotism altogether when he is speaking mainly of himself.

In my day-dreams, indulged in mostly when smarting under the consciousness of my own deficiencies, I have tried to think out the attributes that ought to be concentrated in the ideal war correspondent. He ought to possess the gift of tongues—to be conversant with all European languages, a neat assortment of the Asiatic languages, and a few of the African tongues, such as Abyssinian, Ashantee, Zulu, and Soudanese. He should have the sweet, angelic temper of a woman, and be as affable as if he were a politician canvassing for a vote; yet, at the same time, be big and ugly enough to impress the conviction that it would be highly unwise to take any liberties with him. The paragon war correspondent should be able to ride anything that chance may offer, from a giraffe to a rat; be able to ride a hundred miles at a stretch, to go without food for a week if needful, and without sleep for as long; never to get tired—never to feel the sensation of a "slight sinking, you know;" and be able at the end of a ride—of a journey however long, arduous, and sleepless—to write round-hand for a foreign telegraph clerk ignorant of the correspondent's language, at the rate of a column an hour for six or eight consecutive hours; after which he should, as a matter of course, gallop back to the scene

of action without an hour's delay. He should be a competent judge of warfare; conversant with all military operations, from the mounting of a corporal's guard to the disposition of an army in the field. He ought to have supreme disregard for hostile fire when real duty calls upon him to expose himself to it; and his pulse should be as calm when shells are bursting around him as if he were watching his bosom-friend undergoing the ordeal of the marriage service. He must have a real instinct for the place and day of an impending combat: he must be able to scent the coming battle from afar, and allow nothing to hinder him from getting forward in time to be a spectator of it. He should be so constituted as to have an intuitive perception how the day hath gone; to be able to discern victory or defeat while as yet, to the spectator not so gifted, the field of strife seems confusion worse confounded; and so to rely on his own judgment as to venture, while the turmoil is dying away, to turn his back upon it, and ride off the earliest bearer of the momentous tidings. To potter about waiting till the last shot be fired; to linger for returns of killed and wounded, and for the measured reports of the commanders; to be the *chiffonier* of the rags of the battlefield—that is work which he must leave to his helpers, if he has any such. Alas! there never was such a man as I have ideally depicted, and there never will be such a man. I think Julius Cæsar would have been an exceptionally brilliant war correspondent, if the profession had been invented in his

time, and if he could have weaned himself from the meaner avocations of commanding armies, conquering countries, and ruling nations. But the first Napoleon, if only he could have been a little truthful occasionally, would have eclipsed Julius Cæsar and knocked William Howard Russell into a cocked hat.

Before the Franco-German War there had been war correspondents, and one at least of those had made for himself a reputation to vie with which no representative of a newer school has any claim. But their work, being almost wholly in the pre-telegraphic period, was carried on under less arduous conditions than those which have confronted the more recent war correspondent. Nor was it incumbent on the former to carry their lives in their hands. Before far-reaching rifled firearms were brought into use, it was quite easy to see a battle without getting within the range of fire. But this is no longer possible, and in the future will be still more impossible. With guns of position that carry six miles, with mobile artillery having a range of more than three miles, and with rifles that kill without benefit of clergy at two miles, the war correspondent may as well stay at home with his mother unless he has hardened his heart to take his full share of the risks of the battle-field. Indeed, if he has determined to look narrowly into the turbulent heart of each successive paroxysm of the bloody struggle—and it is only now by doing this that he can make for himself a genuine and abiding reputa-

tion—he must lay his account with adventuring more risk than falls to the lot of the average soldier. The percentage of casualties among war correspondents has recently been greater than that among the actual fighting men. In the Servian Campaign of 1876, for instance, there were twelve correspondents who kept the field and remained under fire. Of these, three were killed and four wounded. Certainly not more than thirty correspondents and artists, all told, were in the Soudan from the earliest fighting to the final collapse of the Nile expedition; but on or under its cruel sands lie the corpses of at least five of my comrades. O'Donovan, the adventurous pioneer of Merv, perished with Hicks. The last hope has long faded that Vizetelly, endowed though he was with more lives than the proverbial cat, has still a life in hand. Cameron and St. Leger Herbert were struck down on the same bloody day, and rest together in their shallow grave in the hot Bayuda sand. Poor Gordon, who, like myself, had been a soldier before he became a war correspondent, died a lone death of thirst in the heart of the desert while pushing on to where his duty lay. Time would fail me to tell of those who have perished of fevers and other maladies, who have been wounded, shipwrecked, and encountered strange hairbreadth escapes; of others, again, who have come home so broken by hardship and vicissitude that what remains of life to them is naught save weariness and pain. And it is such men whom a commander who has been himself adventurous has

classed with the camp-followers, and has stigmatised as "drones who eat the rations of fighting men and do no work at all"!

It was the Franco-German War of 1870 that brought about the revolution in the methods of war correspondence, although at Saarbrücken, in the earlier days of that great contest, there was as yet scarcely any perception of the opportunities that lay to our hands. But if at Saarbrücken the correspondents thus early on the war-path were still unregenerate in this respect, we had some experiences in which the comic and the tragic were curiously blended. Within two miles of the little town lay a whole French army corps, which any day might overwhelm Saarbrücken and its slender garrison of a battalion of infantry and three squadrons of Uhlans. So we lived, quite a little detachment of us, in an hotel on the outskirts, ready for a judicious bolt. At this hotel there arrived one morning a young German girl who was engaged, we learned, to a sergeant of the gallant Hohenzollerns. She had come, it seemed, to say farewell to her sweetheart before the fighting should begin and he should march away, mayhap never to return. Some of the livelier spirits among us conceived the idéa that the pair should get married before the farewell should be said. Both were willing. The bridegroom's officer gave him leave, on condition that should the alarm sound, he was to join his company without a moment's delay. All was in readiness

and the clergyman was just about to join the couple in holy matrimony, when the sound of a bugle suddenly broke in on the stillness. It was the alarm! The bridegroom hurriedly embraced the bride, buckled on his accoutrements, and darted off to the place of rendezvous. In ten minutes more the combat was in full intensity; the French had carried the heights overhanging the town, and were pouring down upon it their artillery and mitrailleuse fire. Our hotel was right in the line of fire, and soon became exceedingly disagreeable quarters. We got the woman down into the cellar, and waited for events. A shell crashed into the kitchen, burst inside the cooking stove, and blew the wedding breakfast, which was still being kept hot, into what an American colleague called "everlasting smash." It was too hot to stay there, and everybody manœuvred strategically to the rear. A few days later was fought, close to Saarbrücken, the desperate battle of the Spicheren, in which the bridegroom's regiment took a leading part. The day after the battle I was wandering over the field, helping to relieve the wounded, and gazing shudderingly on the heaps of dead. Suddenly I came on our bridegroom, in a sitting posture, with his back resting against a stump. He was stone dead, with a bullet through his throat.

Perhaps the most thrilling episode of all that colossal struggle of 1870 was the singularly dramatic climax of the battle of Gravelotte. All day long, from noon until near the going down of the sun, the roar of the cannon

and the roll of musketry had been incessant. The deep ravine of the Mance between Gravelotte and St. Hubert was a horrible pandemonium wherein seethed struggling masses of German soldiery, torn by the shell-fire of the French batteries, writhing under the stings of the mitrailleuse, bewildered between inevitable death in front and no less inevitable disgrace behind. Again and again frantic efforts were being made to force up out of the hell in the ravine and gain foothold on the edge of the plateau beyond; and ever the cruel sleet of lead beat them back and crushed them down. The long summer day was waning into dusk, and the fortunes of the battle still trembled in the balance, when the last reserve of the Germans—the Second Army Corps—came hurrying up towards the brink of the abyss. In the lurid glare of the blazing village, the German King stood by the wayside and welcomed his stalwart Pomeranians as they passed him. High over the roll of the drums, the blare of the bugles, and the crush of the cannon, rose the eager burst of cheering as the soldiers answered their Sovereign's greeting, and then followed their chiefs down into the fell depths of the terrible chasm. The strain of the crisis was sickening as we waited for the issue in a sort of rapt spasm of sombre silence. The old King sat with his back against a wall on a ladder, one end of which rested on a broken gun-carriage, the other on a dead horse. Bismarck, with an elaborate assumption of coolness which his restlessness belied, made pretence to be

and the clergyman was just about to join the couple in holy matrimony, when the sound of a bugle suddenly broke in on the stillness. It was the alarm! The bridegroom hurriedly embraced the bride, buckled on his accoutrements, and darted off to the place of rendezvous. In ten minutes more the combat was in full intensity; the French had carried the heights overhanging the town, and were pouring down upon it their artillery and mitrailleuse fire. Our hotel was right in the line of fire, and soon became exceedingly disagreeable quarters. We got the woman down into the cellar, and waited for events. A shell crashed into the kitchen, burst inside the cooking stove, and blew the wedding breakfast, which was still being kept hot, into what an American colleague called "everlasting smash." It was too hot to stay there, and everybody manœuvred strategically to the rear. A few days later was fought, close to Saarbrücken, the desperate battle of the Spicheren, in which the bridegroom's regiment took a leading part. The day after the battle I was wandering over the field, helping to relieve the wounded, and gazing shudderingly on the heaps of dead. Suddenly I came on our bridegroom, in a sitting posture, with his back resting against a stump. He was stone dead, with a bullet through his throat.

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reading letters. The roar of the close battle swelled and deepened, till the very ground trembled beneath us. The night fell like a pall, but the blaze of an adjacent conflagration lit up the anxious group here by the churchyard wall. From out the medley of broken troops littering the slope in front, rose suddenly a great shout that grew in volume as it rolled nearer. The hoofs of a galloping horse rattled on the causeway. A moment later Moltke, his face for once quivering with excitement, sprang from the saddle, and, running towards the King, cried out: "It is good for us; we have restored the position, and the victory is with your Majesty!" The King sprang to his feet with a fervent "God be thanked!" and then burst into tears. Bismarck, with a great sigh of relief, crushed his letters in the hollow of his hand; and a simultaneous hurrah welcomed the glad tidings.

On the 1st of March, 1871, the day of the entry into Paris of the German troops, rather a curious experience befell me. While as yet within the German *cordon* in the Place de la Concorde, I observed that I was being dogged, having been called on to answer a question asked by a German commander who was riding up the Champs Élysées. I had no sooner passed out of that *cordon* than I was vehemently assailed by an angry French mob, who insisted that I was a German spy. I made as stout a resistance as was compatible with circumstances, but at length they got me down, and then

I imagined it was all over with me. But a detachment of national guards holding a police post rescued me at the bayonet point from the genial enthusiasts who were dragging me along the gutter on my back, with the expressed intention of drowning me in the basin of an adjacent fountain. A good deal of my clothing had been torn off me, but that was a trifle. Overhauling myself in the police station, I discovered that with half of my great-coat had disappeared my note-book, which was in the pocket of the missing section of the garment. This was a most serious misfortune. In those times I had accustomed myself to write out at full length in my note-book the description of scenes or events of which I was a witness, detailing in form ready for the printer the accounts of incident after incident as the incidents successively evolved themselves. From the summit of the tower overhanging the Cascade I had looked down that morning on King Wilhelm's great review of his army on the Longchamps racecourse; and my description, two columns long, of that remarkable scene was in the lost note-book. One result of this custom of concurrent writing out was that the writer's memory did not charge itself with the recollection of what had been committed to paper; and thus I had not only lost the actual "copy" already indited and out of hand, but was destitute of the power to reproduce the lost matter. While I was internally bewailing myself of this misfortune, a citizen in a fine glow of triumph rushed into the police station. "Voilà!" he shouted, as he waved aloft my note-book

in one hand and my coat-tail in the other; "here is damning evidence that the prisoner is a wicked spy! Here are the villain's notes, the lies he has been writing down concerning our unhappy Paris!" I could have embraced the excited *ouvrier,* frowsy as he was; he had done me an incalculable benefit in his anxiety to have my doom sealed. His face was a study when, in the gladness of my heart, I offered him a five-franc piece. The implacable patriot accepted it.

Presently, under an escort of national guards with fixed bayonets—for the mob was still dangerous—I was marched through a couple of streets to the bureau of a sitting magistrate. My companions were a gentleman in a blouse who was accused of having stolen an ink-bottle; a tatterdemalion detected in selling a couple of cigars to a Bavarian cavalry-man; and a woman whom the Paris mob had stripped and painted divers colours, because she had been caught parleying with a Prussian drummer. The magistrate was so good as to deal with me first. Fortunately I was able to produce to him my British passport and my journalistic credentials. He called in his sister, who had lived in England, to assist him in deciding as to the authenticity of those documents. She promptly pronounced in their favour, and his worship became immediately gracious. He told me that I was free, and he was good enough to lend me an old coat in which to walk to my hotel; at the same time gracefully begging me to excuse what he termed "the little inconvenience I had experienced, on account

of the not unnatural excitement of the Paris populace."

The magistrate's good sister sent me to a bedroom, where I washed off the most flagrant stains of the recent unpleasantness. Outside, the mob was still howling fiercely. Time was very precious to me; I could not endure to wait indefinitely the dispersion of the gentlemen of the pavement, yet I did not care to re-offer myself to their tender mercies. The magistrate's sister in this strait proved herself a ministering angel. She said there was a door opening into a quiet side-alley, and actually offered to escort me to my hotel, which was close by. As we walked, I told the kind lady that I did not know how to thank her; had it been her servant, I could have found no difficulty in requiting the good office, but a lady—"Oh!" she broke in—"that is not so difficult; I will put my pride in my pocket. My brother has a fair salary, but he has not seen a franc of it for six months. We are gentlefolk; we cannot join the *queue* outside the baker's shop, and—and—oh, mon Dieu! we are actually starving"—and the poor lady burst into tears. "We could not take charity," she continued, sobbing—"but we have heard of that kind *don anglais* which, they say, is now being distributed freely; if only one could get a little aid from its bounty!" We had a sub-dépôt in my hotel; I myself was one of the accredited almoners; some of the commissioners were living with me. I hurried the lady into a room in which

there was no one to remark her emotion; then I found John Furley, and told him the little story. Furley was a man of energy. In five minutes a big hamper had been packed full of comestibles, and a porter had it on his back, waiting for the lady's instructions. With the chivalry of a fine gentleman, Furley announced to her that one of his men was at her disposition. She came out into the hall, looked down at the big basket, whose open mouth disclosed among other things a leg of mutton, a couple of fowls, a huge honest loaf, and sundry vegetables; then she gave a great gasp, and I feared that she was about to faint. She was anæmic from sheer want, but she rallied—tears helping her; and then she went silently away with her veil down over her wan face, and the stalwart porter tramping behind her. It was such people as those, with pride and fixed salaries which were not paid, who suffered worst during the siege; and they, too, it was who were the most difficult to relieve when the siege was just over, but without as yet any alleviation of their misery. The women were the most stubborn and the most proud. The concierge would assure the almoner that the two old ladies on such a floor were literally starving. The old ladies, when you pushed their button, would appear, statelily gracious. "Yes, the English were a kind people, and the good God would reward them. There were some poor creatures in the roof who were in pressing need. For themselves, thanks; but no, they could not accept

charity. Merci: bon jour, monsieur!" and then the door would close on the wan eyes and hollow cheeks. Ah me, it was melancholy work!

Elsewhere in this book will be found some detailed account of the fell days of the closing scenes of the Commune, the only phase of it of which I was a witness. All that I need here say is, that in the lurid chaos which marked the ruthless stamping out of the Commune by the Versaillist army under Marshal MacMahon, the conditions under which correspondents tried to fulfil their duties were more full of peril than one could incur in any battle of which I have had experience. In a battle you know your danger. The enemy is for the most part in front, and you can either stand up and take your chance of his fire, or take cover to protect yourself from it. But in the seething turmoil of the last days of the Commune, bullets were flying from front, flanks, and rear. There was a universal raving lust for blood. As Mr. Labouchere cheerfully remarked: "They shot you first, and apologised to your corpse afterwards." The brightest feature of the grim drama which I can recall after so long a lapse of time, was the imperturbable coolness of Mr., afterwards Sir Edward, Malet. He remained in charge of the British Embassy in the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, when Lord Lyons and the rest of the official *personnel* migrated to Versailles. For three long days it seemed that Malet, or at all events the embassy he inhabited, was the target for the artillery

alike of Versaillists and Communards. Shells bedevilled the ball-room and knocked holes miscellaneously all over the building; explosion after explosion blew down the walls of the embassy garden, through which the Versaillists were sapping their way to outflank their stubborn antagonists of the Commune. Malet, bland and cheery as was his wont, quietly and methodically performed his duties; the shell fire apparently concerning him not at all. In no conceivable circumstances could Malet look absurd; and that surely is a great gift! Just before the German siege began, he came out from Paris to Meaux with a communication to Bismarck. I happened to meet him near the German forepost line. His franc-tireur escort had compelled him on the previous night to sleep "under the beautiful stars;" when I met him he was riding between two Prussian Uhlans. He was perched on a great military saddle, the schabracque of which rose about him before and behind; his stirrups were about ten holes too long, and the big troop-horse he bestrode plainly evinced dislike of his civilian rider. No concatenation of circumstances could have tended more to give a man an aspect of grotesque absurdity. But Malet did not in the least look like a guy. He had no consciousness of being ludicrous, and even at the first blush he was not ludicrous. On the contrary, he was self-possessed, easily dignified, and conveyed somehow the impression that this was precisely the mode of progression which he deliberately preferred over all other modes.

I imagine that people at home in England took but faint interest in the little war which in the summer and autumn of 1876 the petty principality of Servia was waging against its Turkish suzerain. It was, nevertheless, an interesting struggle, both in itself and as virtually the prelude to the great Russo-Turkish war of the following year. Up at Deligrad, about 140 miles from Belgrade, the capital of Servia, General Tchernaieff, with his Russian volunteers and rough Servian levies, for three months confronted the Turkish army commanded by that venal old impostor, Abdul Kerim Pasha. Our life with Tchernaieff was almost comically squalid. His headquarters were in a ruined schoolhouse, and his staff lived in holes dug out in the ground and thatched over with reeds. We lay on straw all round a great fire which was maintained in the centre, and which occasionally set light to the roof and burnt us temporarily out of house and home. One morning the Turks woke up from their lethargy, and carried with a rush the defences of the hill of Djunis which Tchernaieff had been holding so long on the swagger. I have always had a shrewd suspicion that Abdul Kerim and Tchernaieff understood each other extremely well; that the former for a price contentedly allowed himself to be amused by the latter during the summer months; and that when the order came from the Seraskierate that the immobility so long allowed to last must at length peremptorily be ended, Tchernaieff was complaisant enough not to make much

more than a brisk show of resistance. The scheme, however, was in a measure thwarted by the honest and zealous fighting of General Dochtouroff heading the Russian volunteers, who died very freely in their trenches, and who had sent many Turkish souls to Hades before they accepted defeat. The Servians behaved badly; their resistance fell to pieces in a few hours; and, in the end, Dochtouroff and myself had to ride through a belt of Turkish skirmishers to escape being cut off.

Anyhow, the game was up, and Servia lay at the mercy of the Turks. I was the only correspondent on the spot, and it behoved me to make the most of this casual advantage. At five o'clock in the afternoon, when I rode away from the blazing huts of Deligrad, more than 120 miles lay between me and my point, the telegraph office at Semlin, the Hungarian town on the other side of the river Save from Belgrade—telegraphing was not permitted from the Servian capital. I had an order for post-horses along the road, and I galloped hard for Paratchin, the nearest post station. When I got there the postmaster had horses, but no vehicle. Now, if I had merely sent a courier, this obstacle would have sufficed effectually to stop him. But it was apparent to me, being my own messenger, that although I could not drive I might ride. True, the Servian post-nags were not saddle-horses; but sharp spurs and the handling of an old dragoon might be relied on to make them travel somehow. All night long I rode that weary

journey, changing horses every fifteen miles, and forcing the vile brutes along at the top of their speed. At nine next morning, sore from head to foot, I was clattering over the stones of the Belgrade main street. The field telegraph-wire had conveyed but a curt, fragmentary intimation of disaster; and all Belgrade, feverish for further news, rushed out into the street as I powdered along. But I had galloped all night, not to gossip in Belgrade but to get to the Semlin telegraph-wire, and I never drew rein till I reached the ferry-boat. At Semlin one long drink of beer, and then at once to the task of writing, hour after hour against time, the tidings of which I was the bearer from the interior. After I had written my story and put it on the wires, I lay down in my clothes and slept twenty hours without awakening once. I had meant to start back for Deligrad on the afternoon of the day of my arrival in Belgrade, but sheer fatigue had caused me to lose a day in sleep. It seemed to me, however, when I recovered from my chagrin at this delay, that perhaps, after all, I was fairly entitled to a good long sleep; for I had seen a battle that lasted six hours, ridden a hundred and twenty miles, and written to the *Daily News* a telegraphic message four columns long—all in the space of thirty hours.

At the beginning of the Russo-Turkish War in the early spring of 1877, the first great anxiety with the correspondents who were detailed to follow the Russian

fortunes was to obtain an authorisation to accompany the armies in the field. Without such an authorisation the correspondent, if he gets forward at all, is liable to be treated as a spy and soon finds himself in trouble. I suppose there is no correspondent of any considerable general experience who has not been in custody over and over again on suspicion of being a spy. I have been a prisoner myself in France (made so both by Germans and French), Spain, Servia, Germany, Hungary, Russia, Roumania, and Bulgaria; and I cannot conscientiously recommend any of these countries from this point of view. The authorities of the Russian army were very fair and courteous about the authorisations of correspondents. In principle they accepted all who presented themselves accredited by respectable papers and bringing a recommendation from any Russian ambassador. There was to be no field censorship; you simply gave your honour not to reveal impending movements, concentrations, and intentions. You might, with this exception, write and despatch just what you chose; only a file of your paper had to be sent to the headquarters, and a polyglot officer—Colonel Hausenkampf by name—was appointed to read all those newspapers, and to be down upon you if you exceeded what he considered fair comment. Then you got a warning; and, if you were held to have gravely and spitefully transgressed, you were expelled.

I always pitied the unfortunate Colonel Hausenkampf from the bottom of my heart. He had to read all the

letters published in all the newspapers of all the correspondents, and I predicted for him either speedy suicide or hopeless insanity. But he remained alive and moderately sane, in spite of this arduous duty and of the task which at the outset devolved upon him, of listening to every correspondent who made application for a permission. He was fearfully badgered. One day I called on him at the headquarters in Ploesti, and found him seated in a bower in a garden, resolutely confronted by a gaunt man in a red beard and a ferocious tweed suit. "Mon Dieu!" exclaimed the Colonel to me —"will you oblige me by taking this man away and killing him? He is a Scotsman, it seems, and I am not acquainted with the Scottish language; he knows none other than his native tongue! He comes here daily, and looms over me obstinately for an hour at a time, firing off at intervals the single word 'Permission!' and tendering me, as if he would hold a pistol at my head, a letter in English from a person whom he calls the Duke of Argyll—a noble, I suppose, of this wild man's country!" It is needless to add, since the "wild man" was a Scot, that he achieved his permission and did very good work as a correspondent.

We were all numbered like so many ticket-porters, and at first carried on the arm a huge brass badge, which heightened our resemblance to the members of that respectable avocation. The French correspondents' sense of the beautiful was, however, outraged by this neat and ornamental distinguishing mark; so at their

instance there was substituted a more dainty style of *brassard,* with the double-headed eagle in silver lace on a yellow silk ground. The permission was written on the back of the photograph of the correspondent to whom it was granted, which photograph was duly stamped on the breast of the subject with the great seal of the headquarters. A duplicate of this photograph was inserted in a "Correspondents' Album," kept by the commandant of the headquarters. When I last saw this book there were some eighty-two photographs in it; and I am bound to admit that it was not an overwhelming testimony to the good looks of the profession. I got, I remember, into sundry and divers difficulties through having incautiously shaved off some hair from my chin which was there when my photograph was taken. In vain I argued that it was not the beard that made the man; the sentries were stiff-necked on the point of identity, and I had to cultivate a new chin-tuft with great assiduity.

My most prominent colleague in the Russo-Turkish War was Mr. Januarius Aloysius MacGahan, by extraction an Irishman, by birth an American. Of all the men who have gained reputation as war correspondents, I regard MacGahan as the most brilliant. He was the hero of that wonderful lonely ride through the Great Desert of Central Asia to overtake Kauffmann's Russian army on its march to Khiva. He it was who stirred Europe to its inmost heart by the terrible, and not less truthful than terrible, pictures of what have passed into

history as the "Bulgarian atrocities." It is, indeed, no exaggeration to aver that, for better or worse, MacGahan was the virtual author of the Russo-Turkish War. His pen-pictures of the atrocities so excited the fury of the Sclave population of Russia, that their passionate demand for retribution on the "unspeakable Turk" virtually compelled the Emperor Alexander II. to undertake the war. MacGahan's work throughout the long campaign was singularly effective, and his physical exertions were extraordinary; yet he was suffering all through from a lameness that would have disabled eleven out of twelve men. He had broken a bone in his ankle just before the declaration of war, and when I first met him the joint was encased in plaster-of-Paris. He insisted on accompanying Gourko's raid across the Balkans; and in the Hankioj Pass his horse slid over a precipice and fell on its rider, so that the half-set bone was broken again. But the indomitable MacGahan refused to be invalided by this mishap. He quietly had himself hoisted on to a tumbril, and so went through the whole adventurous expedition, being involved thus helpless in several actions, and once all but falling into the hands of the Turks. He kept the front throughout, long after I had gone home disabled by fever; he brilliantly chronicled the fall of Plevna and the surrender of Osman Pasha; he crossed the Balkans with Skobeleff in the dead of that terrible winter; and, finally, at the premature age of thirty-two, he died, characteristically, a martyr to duty and to friendship. When the Russian

armies lay around Constantinople waiting for the settlement of the Treaty of Berlin, typhoid fever and camp pestilences were slaying their thousands and their tens of thousands. Lieutenant Greene, an American officer officially attached to the Russian army, fell sick, and MacGahan devoted himself to the duty of nursing his countryman. His devotion cost him his life. As Greene was recovering MacGahan sickened of malignant typhus; and a few days later they laid him in his far-off foreign grave, around which stood weeping mourners of a dozen nationalities.

Another colleague was Mr. Frank Millet, who, still young, has forsaken the war-path, and appears to be on the high road to the inferior position of a Royal Academician. Millet, like MacGahan, is an American. He accompanied Gourko across the Balkans after the fall of Plevna. The hardships which he cheerily endured when men were frozen around him in their wretched bivouacs among the snow, and when to write his letters he had to thaw his frozen ink and chafe sensation into his numbed fingers, move admiration not less than the brilliant quality of the work performed under conditions so arduous. Lieutenant Greene, in his work on the campaign which constitutes its history, remarks that of the seventy-five correspondents who began the campaign only three, and all those Americans—MacGahan and Millet of the *Daily News*, and Grant of the *Times*—followed its fortune to the close. But this is not strictly correct; one other member of our profession—for that

profession surely includes the war-artist—saw the war from beginning to end, Frederic Villiers, then the artist-correspondent of the *Graphic*.

The first serious fighting of the campaign occurred on that June morning when Dragomiroff's division of the Russian army forced the passage of the Danube under the fire of the Turkish batteries about Sistova. It happened that Villiers and I were the only correspondents who were spectators of that operation.

It was still dark when we threaded our way through the chaos in the streets of Simnitza, and at length made our way down into the willow grove by the Danube side, where Yolchine's brigade was waiting until the pontoon boats should be ready for its embarkation. It was a strange, weird time. The darkness was so dense that scarce anything could be seen around one; and the Turkish bank was only just to be discerned, looming black up against the hardly less dark and sullen sky. Not a light was permitted—not even a cigarette was allowed to be smoked. When men spoke at all, which was but seldom, it was in whispers; and there was only a soft hum of low talk, half drowned by the gurgle of the Danube, and broken occasionally by the launching of a pontoon boat. The grey dawn faintly began to break. We could dimly discern Dragomiroff, mud almost to the waist, directing the marshalling of the pontoon boats close to the water's edge. Here come the

"Avengers," a stern, silent band, the cross in silver standing out from the sombre fur of their caps. They have the place of honour in the first boats. As the leading pontoon pulls out, Captain Liegnitz, the gallant German *attaché*, darts forward and leaps into it. The stalwart Linesmen of Yolchine's brigade are manning the other boats. The strong strokes of the sailors shoot us out into the stream. The gloom of the night is waning fast, and now we can faintly discern, across the broad swirl of water, the crags of the Turkish bank and the steep slope above. What if the Turks are there in force? A grim precipice that, truly, to carry at the bayonet point in the teeth of a determined enemy! And an enemy is there, sure enough, and on the alert. There is a flash out of the gloom, and the near whistle and scream of a shell thrills us as it speeds over us and bursts among the men in the willows behind us. There follows shell after shell, from right opposite, from higher up, and from the knoll still higher up, close to where the minarets of Sistova are now dimly visible. The shells are falling and bursting on the surface of the Danube; they splash us with the spray they raise; their jagged splinters fly yelling by us. There is no shelter; we must stand here in this open boat, this densely packed mass of men, and take what fortune Heaven may send us. The face of the Danube, pitted with falling shells, is flecked too with craft crowded to the gunwale. Hark to that crash, the splintering of wood and the riving of iron, there on our starboard quarter!

A huge pontoon laden with guns and gunners has been struck by a shell. It heaves heavily twice; its stern rises; there are wild cries—a confused turmoil of men and horses struggling in the water; the guns sink, and drowning men drift by us with the current down to their death. From out the foliage, now, in the little cove for which we are heading, belches forth volley after volley of musketry fire, helping the devilry of the shells. Several men of our crew are down ere our craft touches the mud of the Danube shore. The "Avengers" are already landed; so is Yolchine, with a handful of his Linesmen. As we tumble out of the boats with the bullets whizzing about our ears, and swarm up on to the bank, we are bidden by energetic orders to lie down. We fall prone on the damp and muddy sward under the cover of a little bank. Already dead and wounded men lie here thick among the living and hale. Boat after boat has disembarked its freight. At length Yolchine thinks he has men enough. He who, with young Skobeleff, has never lain down, gives the word, and the two spring up the bank; a billow of strong, supple Russian soldiers released from restraint surges with resistless rush up the steep ascent. The detachment of Turkish soldiers holding the position are overwhelmed, but they do not fly. No; they die where they stand, neither quailing nor asking for quarter. For that brave band of Mustaphis, Abdul Kerim Pasha unconsciously furnished a noble epitaph. "They have never been heard of since," he wrote. No, nor will they till the last trumpet sounds!

The first time I saw close the Emperor Alexander II., so ruthlessly assassinated a few years later, was on the day after that June morning on which General Dragomiroff's division of Russian soldiers had forced, with considerable loss, the passage of the Danube. The Tzar had come to thank his gallant troops for the exploit of fighting their way across the great river under conditions so arduous. In front of the long massive line drawn up on the crest of the slope to the eastward of Sistova stood three men awaiting the coming of the Great White Tzar—the divisional General Dragomiroff; the brigadier, gallant old Yolchine; and young Skobeleff, who had shown the way to all and sundry. The Emperor, having acknowledged the salute and greeting of the troops, embraced the divisional general in the Russian fashion, and shook hands cordially with the cheery little brigadier. Then he approached Skobeleff—and we all watched the little scene with intent curiosity; for it was as notorious that Skobeleff was in disfavour, as that his splendid valour of the previous morning might well have effaced any save the most obstinate disfavour. For a moment Alexander hesitated as the two tall, proud, soldierly men confronted each other; one could discern in the working of his features the short struggle between prejudice and appreciation. It was soon over, and the wrong way for Skobeleff. The Tzar frowned, turned short on his heel, and strode resolutely away without a gesture or a word of notice. Skobeleff, for his part,

bowed deeply, flushed scarlet, then grew pale and set his teeth hard. It was a flagrant slight in the very face of the army, and a gross injustice; but Skobeleff took it in a proud silence that seemed to me very noble. It was not long before he could afford to be magnanimous. This despite was done him on the 29th of June. On September 3rd Skobeleff, after having heaped exploit on exploit, led the successful assault on the Turkish position at Loftcha, and drove his adversaries out of that strong place not less by the splendid daring he so conspicuously displayed than by the skilfulness of the tactics he had devised. On the following evening, at his own dinner-table in the imperial marquee at Gorni Studen, Tzar Alexander stood up and bade the company to pledge him in a toast to "Skobeleff, the hero of Loftcha!" It has not been given to many men to earn a vindication so grand and triumphant as that. Nor is it every omnipotent Emperor who would have shown a frankness so manful. Absolute monarchs are not addicted to constructive apologies.

In campaigning in Bulgaria we correspondents had to rely on our own resources; it was like going a-gipsying, with now and then a battle thrown in by way of variety. When our Russian friends crossed the Danube, it became necessary for us to abandon the flesh-pots of Egypt, in the shape of the civilisation, beauty, and good cooking of Bucharest, and to depart, so to speak, into the wilderness, there to join the army. My companion

in this, as in previous campaigns, was Frederic Villiers, then the artist of the *Graphic*. Villiers is an excellent fellow, but he had, like the rest of us, his weak points. Perhaps his weakest point was that he imagined going to bed in his spurs contributed to his martial aspect. He may have been right, but as I shared the bed-place on the floor of a narrow waggon, I did not see the matter quite in that light. We had for joint attendant my old Servian courier Andreas. Let me describe our travelling equipage. We had found in Bucharest a vehicle which, when covered with leather and fitted with sundry appliances, made a sufficient habitation for two men who could pack tight, and give and take one with the other. By a simple arrangement the floor of this carriage became at night a bed-place, the cushions, and the poultry which Andreas cherished, serving for a mattress. Our waggon was drawn by two sturdy grey horses, one of which was blind—a characteristic which the man who sold him to us cited as an important advantage, as calculated to make him steadier in a crowd. The vehicle I have described was not a waggon only. Cunningly contrived in a roll attached to one of its sides, we carried a sort of elementary canvas apartment. Villiers and I were "at home" in our canvas drawing-room to some very distinguished personages in the course of the campaign. If we were within there was no pleading "not at home," for, as the awning was open on at least two sides, the inmates were visible to the naked eye a long way off. Our cooking appliances con-

sisted of a stew-pan and a frying-pan. One does not require any more weapons than these to perform wherewithal the functions of a plain cook. I am a plain cook myself; perhaps, to be more explicit, I should say a very plain cook. Of one grand discovery in culinary science I can boast. I found out in Bulgaria that when you attempt to fry lean meat without fat, lard, oil, or butter, you not only burn the meat, but you burn the frying-pan also!

In the early days of this campaign—MacGahan away beyond the Balkans with Gourko, and Millet far off in the Dobrutcha with Zimmermann—the task devolved upon me of covering Bulgaria from the right flank to the left flank of the Russian main advance; and I had to be in the saddle morning, noon, and night; for I had to try at least to see everything, and I mostly had to be my own courier back to the telegraph base at Bucharest. General Ignatieff, the famous diplomatist, was a good friend in giving me timely hints of impending events. When I was taking leave of him after my first visit, the general said: "Come to me when you want anything. I like your paper because it is a Christian paper, and I am a very Christian man; and if I am not mistaken you are so also." I regarded this last observation as strong proof of the aphorism that discerning penetration is one of the leading attributes of a great diplomatist.

Probably—*pace* Lord Wolseley—there is no harder toil than that which the zealous war correspondent must

undergo in a country almost wholly destitute of communications, and when momentous events are crowding fast one on the other. The nearest telegraph office is his goal; for us in Bulgaria, the nearest available telegraph office was in Bucharest, scores of long miles distant. The supply of trustworthy couriers was very scanty, and even the best courier will not strain ardently when he is not working for his own hand. I write in constant consciousness of being over-egotistic; but one would like that the newspaper-reader at home should know under what conditions he is served with war news. To this day I shudder at the recollection of those long wearisome rides on dead-tired horses from the Lom, or the Balkans, or the Plevna country, through the foodless region down to Sistova on the Danube, where the bridge of boats was. Leaving my horse in Sistova, I would tramp in the darkness across the bridge and over the islands and flats ankle-deep in sand, the three miles' distance to Simnitza, the squalid village on the Roumanian side of the great river. I have reached Simnitza so beaten that I could scarcely stagger up the slope. Once when I got to the Danube bridge, I found that it was forbidden to cross it. Several pontoons in the centre, said the officer on duty, were under water, and there was no thoroughfare; nobody, he said, was allowed to go upon it. I respectfully represented to him that as I did not belong to the Russian army, it was nothing to him what might happen to me. He laughed; said that if I drowned it was no affair of his; and, to quote

his own lively expression, that I might go to the devil if I had a mind. I escaped the devil, but had to accept a thorough ducking, and was very nearly carried down stream in the direction of the Black Sea, which might have been a worse fate than that indicated by the Russian officer. Simnitza reached somehow, there were still about ninety miles to Bucharest. Off then to Giurgevo, a fifty miles' night ride in a country rattle-trap drawn by four half-broken ponies harnessed abreast. I have been upset freely all along that dreary plain; spilt into a river, capsised into a village, overturned by a dead horse into a foul and dismal swamp. During the railway journey from Giurgevo to Bucharest it was possible to begin inditing my telegram, writing a few pages at a time when the stoppages at the stations occurred. Bucharest finally reached, I had to finish my message without delaying even to wash, that it might be in time for next morning's paper in England. I have reached Bucharest so encased with mud, so blackened with powder, so clotted with inch-deep dust, so blistered with heat, that the people of Brofft's hotel had difficulty in recognising me. The telegram finished—long or short, there was no respite till that were done—came a bath and then food—they used to charge me double price for those meals, and I rather think they lost money; and then a few hours' sleep till the evening train back to Giurgevo should start. Up and off again by it, and so back without a halt to the position which I had quitted to despatch the telegram.

Villiers and myself were the only civilian spectators of the desperate and futile attack which the Russian soldiers commanded by Krüdener and Schahoffskoy made on that lovely July day of 1877 upon the girdle of earthworks with which Osman Pasha had partly surrounded the Bulgarian town of Plevna. Up among the oak shrubs on the height of Radischevo, while the Russian cannon thundered over our heads, we watched the resolute but hopeless assaults of the Russian infantrymen on the Turkish redoubts on the gentle swell in the bosom of the great central valley. Plevna lay down yonder to the left front in its snug valley among the foliage, quiet and serene like a sleeping babe amidst a pack of raging wolves, the sun glinting on its spires and minarets. Behind us, the Russian cannon belching fire and iron. Close to us, the general with set face and terrible eager eyes, the working of his lips and fingers belying his forced composure. And at our feet hell itself, raging in all its lurid splendour, all its fell horror. A chaos of noises comes back to us in the light summer wind: the sharp crackle of the rifle fire, the ping of the bullets, the crash of near-exploding shells, loud shouts of reckless men bent on death or victory, shrieks and yells of anguish—ay, even groans, so near are we. Look at that swift rush; see the upheaval of the flashing bayonets, listen to the roar of triumph, sharpened by the clash of steel against steel! There is an answering hurrah from the Russian gunners

above us, for the Russian infantrymen have carried at the bayonet-point the two nearest Turkish redoubts.

Yes; that much, it is true, was gallantly accomplished, but with a terrible loss of life and waste of blood. The struggle will bear telling more in detail. Two brigades were lying down in the reverse slope of the ridge behind the guns, and, therefore, behind us also. The order to rise up and advance over the ridge was hailed with cheers; and the battalions, with a swift, swinging step streamed up the steep slope, the movement heralded by the artillery with increased rapidity of fire. That fire was momentarily arrested while the infantrymen crossed the ridge, breaking ranks to pass through the interval between the guns, which presently, as soon as the front was clear again, renewed their fire with feverish activity. The Turkish shells hurtled through the ranks as the Russian battalions advanced, and men were already down in numbers; but the long undulating line tramped steadily over the stubble of the ridge, and crashed through the undergrowth in which we were sitting on the descent beyond. No skirmish line was thrown out in advance. The fighting line remained the formation for a time, till, what with impatience and what with men dropping, it broke into a rapid spray of humanity, and surged on swiftly and with no close cohesion. The supports were close up, and ran forward into the fighting line independently and eagerly. It was a veritable chase of fighting men impelled by a burning desire to get forward and come to close quar-

ters with the enemy firing at them yonder from behind the shelter of the parapet of the redoubt.

Villiers follows with his eye the fortunes of the left brigade, I concentrate my attention on the right—Tcherkoff's—brigade. Presently all along the face of the infantry advance burst forth flaming volleys of musketry fire. The jagged line springs onward through the maize-fields, gradually assuming a concave front. The roll of rifle fire from both sides is incessant, yet dominated by the fiercer and louder turmoil of the artillery above us. The cannon redouble the energy of their fire. The crackle of the musketry fire swells into a sharp continuous peal. The clamour of the hurrahs of the fighting men comes back to us on the breeze, making the blood tingle with the excitement of the fray. A village is blazing on the left. The fell fury of the battle has entered on its maddest paroxysm. The reserves which had remained behind the crest are being pushed forward over the ridge in reinforcement. The wounded are beginning to trickle back to behind the ridge—some of the poor fellows have already passed us. We can see the dead and the more severely wounded lying where they have fallen on the stubbles and among the maize. The living waves of fighting men are pouring over them ever on and on. The gunners behind us stand to their work with a will on the shell-swept ridge. The Turkish cannon fire begins to weaken from that earthwork opposite to us. More supports stream down with a louder cheer into the Russian fighting line.

Suddenly the disconnected bodies are drawing together. We can discern the officers signalling for the concentration by the waving of their swords. The distance of the Russian front from the Turkish parapet is not now 200 yards. There is a wild rush, headed by the colonel of the central battalion of the brigade. The Turks in the redoubt hold their ground, and fire steadily and with terrible effect, into the rushing masses of their enemies. The colonel's horse goes down. Yes, but the colonel is on his feet in a second, and waving his sword, leads his men forward on foot. But only for a few paces. He staggers and falls; the brave colonel is a dead man.

We can hear faintly the tempest-gust of wrath, half howling, half yell, with which his men—bayonets at the charge—rush on to avenge him. They are across the ditch and over the parapet, and in among the Turks in an avalanche of maddened revenge. Not many Turks get the chance to escape from the gleaming bayonets swayed by muscular Russian arms. There was a momentary desperate struggle, hand to hand, bayonet to bayonet; and then the Russians were in possession of the Turkish redoubt No. 1, with the two guns inside it. The Turks had been hurled out, what of them lived to escape; we watched the huddled mass of them in the gardens and vineyards behind the position, cramming the narrow track between the trees to gain the cover of their second position.

The redoubt farther to the left was also captured,

but, although Schahoffskoy threw in repeated reinforcements, it could not be held by the Russians, although they were loath to leave grip of it.

And now, ardent as they are, the Russians get no farther. It is but too apparent that there are not men enough for the further enterprise. Nearer Plevna, there has occurred a swift succession of furious charges and countercharges between Turks and Russians, in which, as the final issue, the latter have got the worse. See the stubborn, gallant fellows there, standing now all but leaderless—for nearly all the officers are down—sternly waiting death there for lack of leaders either to lead them forward or to march them back! Noble heroism or sheer stolidity, which? "For God and the Tzar!" is the shout of answer that comes back to us on the wind, as the gaps torn open by the Turkish fire are made good, and the ranks knit themselves the closer. The utter pity of it! A craving that is almost irresistible comes over one to abandon inaction, and to be doing something—something, no matter what, in this acme, this climax of concentrated slaughter. The mad excitement of the battle surges up into the brain like strong drink. The estimable citizen sitting at home at ease, can form no idea how hard it is, in such a convulsion of emotion, to bide at rest and write out a telegram with industrious accuracy; how difficult to compose sentences coherently when the brain is on fire and the pulses are bounding as if they would burst.

The sun sank in a glow of lurid crimson. The

Russian defeat was utter. The *débris* of the attacking troops came sullenly back, companies that had gone down into the fray two hundred strong returning now by fives and tens. For three hours there had been a steady current of wounded men up from out the battle to the reverse slope of the ridge from the face of which we watched, back into comparative safety. All around us the air was heavy with the low moaning of the wounded, who had cast themselves down behind us to gain relief from the agony of motion. A crowd of maimed wretches were hustling each other round the fountain at the foot of the slope, craving with wistful longing for a few drops of its blood-stained and scanty water. Bad was their plight; but one's blood turned at the thought of the awful fate of the poor fellows who, too severely wounded to move to the rear, were lying on the maize-slopes down there, waiting for inevitable cruel death at the hands of an enemy who not only gave no quarter, but savagely mutilated before he slew.

The Turks spread over the battlefield, slaughtering as they advanced, and were threatening to carry the ridge, when the wounded who lay behind it would have been at their cruel mercy. In this hour of terrible strain Schahoffskoy proved himself a gallant and a feeling man. "Gentlemen," said he to his staff and the people about him, "we and the escort must co-operate to hold the front. These poor wounded must not be abandoned!" The bugle sounded the "assembly," but

there rallied to the sound but a poor company of beaten-out men, most of whom were wounded. We extended along that grim ridge, each man moving to and fro in a little beat of his own, to show a semblance of force against the Bashi-Bazouks. Through the glowing darkness one could watch the streaks of flame foreshortened close below us; and nerves, tried by a long day of foodlessness, excitement, fatigue, and constant exposure to danger, quivered under the prolonged tension of endurance as the throbbing hum of the bullets sped through or over the straggling line. At length dragoons from the reserve relieved us; and so, following the general who had lost an army going in search of an army which had lost its general, we turned the heads of our jaded horses, and, threading our way through the wounded, rode slowly away from the blood-stained ridge. It was only to endure a night of wretchedness. No sooner had we established a bivouac, and general and aide-de-camp, Cossack and correspondent, had thrown themselves on the dewy ground and fallen into slumber, than the alarm arose that the Bashi-Bazouks were surrounding us. Again and again the little band wearily arose and struggled its way through the loose environment of the Turkish marauders. At length daybreak came, and I rode away on the journey to Bucharest, the bearer to the world of the details of the catastrophe. Mile after mile of that dreary road the good horse covered loyally, tired and foodless as he was; but I felt him gradually dying away under me.

The stride shortened, and the flanks began to heave ominously. I had to spur him sharply, although I felt every stab as if it had pierced myself. If he could only hold on to Sistova, rest and food awaited him there. But some three miles short of that place he staggered, and then went down. I had to leave the poor gallant brute as he fell, and tramp on into Sistova with my saddle on my head.

The Russo-Turkish campaign had been in progress for several months before I had the honour of being presented to the Emperor Alexander II. That fell out in this wise. The Imperial headquarters were in the Bulgarian village of Gorni Studen when the fighting began in the Schipka Pass up in the Balkans. General Ignatieff gave me a timely hint, and I started immediately for the scene of action. As we rode along through the beautiful valleys that trend up into the Balkans, we met the hordes of wretched Bulgarian fugitives who had fled across the mountain chain from the fell retribution of the Turks. The whole country seemed one great picnic; but it was an indescribably mournful picnic. My artist-companion revelled in the picturesqueness of the vivid colours of the women's dresses; but he had no heart to depict the bivouacs in their profound misery. We were the witnesses, not of a few casual fugitives, but of the general exodus of the inhabitants of a whole province. There were peasants, but there were also many families of the better class

—families whose women were dressed, not in dingy Bulgarian clouts or in Turkish trousers, but as the Englishwoman of the period attired herself. There were women to whom one felt it not quite the thing to speak without an introduction, yet whose only habitation was the shade of a tree, whose only means of conveyance was a miserable pony on which they sat with a child in arms and another clinging behind. Many had no means of conveyance at all; and one saw women plodding painfully, carrying children in their arms, whom they tried to shade with parasols—poor fond creatures!—the tender folly of motherhood, when homes were blazing behind them, and misery about them and before them. In war men take their chance—if they fall, they fall, so to speak, in the way of business—but the business sickens one when the rigours of evil fortune involve helpless women and children.

We reached the fire-swept pass of the Schipka on the afternoon of August 23rd, just as the Russian fortunes were trembling in the balance. There had been almost continuous fighting ever since the morning of the 21st. Suleiman's Turks were 30,000 strong. At the beginning Darozinski, the Russian commander of the force garrisoning the Schipka, had little more than 5,000 bayonets with forty guns in the defensive positions. There had come to him early on the 22nd, swiftly marching from Selvi, a strong regiment commanded by the valiant Colonel Stolietoff, who a few months later conducted a Russian mission from Central

Asia to Cabul, an enterprise which gave rise to the Afghan war of the winter of 1878—79. The unequal fight of 7,000 Russians against 30,000 Turks lasted for many hours. And at length, as the shadows were falling, the Turks had so worked round on both the Russian flanks that it seemed as though the claws of the crab were momentarily about to close behind the worn Muscovites, and as if the Turkish columns climbing either face of the Russian ridge would clasp hands in rear of the Russian position.

The moment was dramatic with an intensity to which the tameness of civilian life can furnish no parallel. The two Russian chiefs, expecting imminently to be environed, had sent a last telegram to the Tzar assuring him that, please God, driven into their positions and beset, they and their soldiers would hold their ground to the last drop of the last man's blood. It was six o'clock. There was a lull in the fighting, of which the Russians could take no advantage since the reserves were engaged up to the hilt. The grimed, sun-blistered men were beaten out with heat, fatigue, hunger, thirst, and wounds. There had been no cooking for three days, and there was no water within the Russian lines. The poor fellows lay panting on the bare ridge, reckless in their utter exhaustion that it was swept by the Turkish rifle fire. Others doggedly fought on down among the rocks, forced to give ground, but doing so grimly and reluctantly. The cliffs and valleys resounded with triumphant Turkish shouts of "Allah! il Allah!"

The two Russian commanders stood on the parapet of the St. Nicholas redoubt, on the loftiest and most exposed peak of the position. Their glasses were scanning the visible glimpses of the steep brown road leading up from out the Iantra Valley, through stunted copses of sombre green and yet more sombre dark rock. Stolietoff cries aloud in a sudden access of excitement, grips his brother commander hard by the arm, and points down the pass. The head of a long black column is plainly visible against the reddish-brown bed of the road. "Now God be thanked!" exclaims Darozinski solemnly. He was a dead man thirty hours later. Both commanders cross themselves with bared heads. The troops spring to their feet; they descry the long black serpent coiling up the tortuous brown road. Through the green copses a glint of sunshine flashes, banishes the sombreness, and dances on the glittering bayonets.

Such a gust of Russian cheers whirled and eddied among the mountain-tops, that the Turkish war-cries were drowned in the welcome which the Russian soldiers sent to their comrades hurrying to help them. As the head of the column came nearer, it was discerned that it consisted of mounted men. Had Radetsky then, men asked one another, sent cavalry to cope with infantry among the precipices of the Balkans? The column halted, and from its bosom a mountain battery came into action against the Turkish position on one of the ridges. The riders dismounted, formed up,

and then marched swiftly until within easy range of the Turks, when they broke and scattered, and straightway from behind every stone and bush spurted white jets of powder-smoke.

The column was a battalion of a crack rifle brigade, and the brigade was not three kilometres behind. Radetsky, down in the valley had dismounted a Cossack regiment and taken over its ponies for behoof of the leading rifle battalion, at whose head he himself had pushed on. He marched up the pass with his staff behind him, ran the triple gauntlet of the Turkish rifle fire, and joined his two subordinate commanders on the peak. Fighting on the following morning began before dawn, and endured during the whole day. About nine a.m. General Dragomiroff came up with the Podolsk and Jitomer regiments comprising one of his divisions. With the latter he marched up towards the peak along a road every step of which was swept by bullet-fire. He had reached the central position, and was deploying the Jitomers for attack, when a bullet, passing through his right knee, brought him to the ground. The gallant old man clung to his spectacles; and when we had borne him into comparative safety, he himself ripped open his trouser-leg and bound a handkerchief round the wounded knee. Surgeons gathered around him, but, like the true soldier he was, he insisted on waiting for his turn.

It was a very bloody day; and on that exposed backbone of bare rock, commanded on either side by the Turkish fire, no man's life was worth five minutes'

purchase. I was burning to get to the telegraph wire—the more eager because it seemed to me that during the day the Russians had so prospered that, although the struggle was sure to last for some time, they would be able at least to hold their own. I asked the general what was his estimate of the situation. Radetsky was oracular. "The Turks," said he, "will no doubt renew their attacks to-morrow with fresh troops, and will probably do so for a good many morrows. But," he added grimly, "I am a tough man, and, with God's help, come Turk, come devil, I shall hold on here till I am killed or ordered away." That pronouncement was good enough for me. It was already full dark when, having bidden farewell to the friendly general and to my comrade Villiers, who had determined to remain on the Schipka, I started off on the journey to Bucharest, where the nearest telegraph office was, a distance of about a hundred and seventy miles.

All night long I rode hard, having posted relays of horses; and on the morning of the 25th, having neither eaten, drunk, nor rested since the morning of the previous day, I rode into the Imperial headquarters in Gorni Studen. The first man I met was General Ignatieff, who called out—

"Where from, now?"

"From the Schipka," was my reply. "I left there late last night."

"The devil you did!" exclaimed Ignatieff. "You've beaten all our messengers by hours. Yours must be

the last news; and you must see the emperor and tell it him."

Now I had not been exactly brought up among emperors, but I have at least some sense of propriety, and I knew that a man ought to wait on an emperor in his Sunday clothes. I hadn't seen any Sunday clothes, or Sundays either, for three months; and I was conscious that my aspect was eminently disreputable. I had been wearing clothes originally white for over a fortnight, night and day. The black of my saddle had come off on to them with great liberality; and they were spotted with the blood of poor General Dragomiroff, whom, when wounded, I had helped to carry into a place of comparative safety. I had not washed for three days, and I altogether felt a humiliatingly dilapidated representative of that great empire on which the sun never sets. But Ignatieff insisted that in the circumstances the Emperor would by no means stand on ceremony. He went inside and awakened his Imperial Majesty, who had been asleep; and he presently ushered me through the Cossack guard into the dingy alcove which formed the hall of audience. The Imperial quarters were a dismantled Turkish house, the balcony of which, where the Emperor stood, was enclosed with common canvas curtains. There was not even a carpet on the rugged boards. A glimpse into the bedroom whence his Majesty had emerged showed a tiny cabin with mud walls, and a camp bed standing on a mud floor. The Emperor received me with great kindness,

shaking hands, and paying a compliment to my hard riding. He was gaunt, worn, and haggard, his voice broken by nervousness and by the asthma that afflicted him. Some months later I saw his Majesty in St. Petersburg—a very monarch, upright of figure, proud of gait, attired in a brilliant uniform, and covered with decorations. A glittering court and suite thronged around the stately man with enthusiastically respectful homage. The dazzling splendour of the Winter Palace formed the setting of the sumptuous picture. And as I gazed on the magnificent scene, I could hardly realise that the central figure of it, in the pomp of his Imperial state, was of a verity the selfsame man in whose presence I had stood in the squalid Bulgarian hovel—the same worn, anxious, shabby, wistful man who, with spasmodic utterance, and the expression in his eyes as of a hunted deer, had asked me breathless questions as to the episodes and issue of the fighting.

I ventured to suggest that I could make him understand these much better if I had a sheet of paper on which to draw a plan. The Emperor said at once—

"Ignatieff, go and fetch paper and pencil."

Ignatieff went; and his Majesty and myself were alone together, standing opposite each other, with a little green baize table dividing us. Presently Ignatieff returned with a sheet of foolscap on which I rapidly sketched the positions, explaining the details as I pro-

ceeded. The Emperor caught up the salient points with the quickness of a trained military intelligence.

"Mr. Forbes," said he—he spoke in English—"you have been a soldier?"

"Yes, your Majesty," was my reply.

"In the Artillery or Engineers, doubtless?"

"No, sir," said I, "in the cavalry of the Line."

The Emperor remarked—

"I was not aware that your cavalry officers were conversant with military draftsmanship."

I replied that I had served as a private trooper, not as an officer; thereby, I fear, conveying to his Majesty the impression that the honest British dragoon is habitually skilled in plan-making. When I had finished telling what I knew, the Emperor said with great graciousness—

"Mr. Forbes, I have had reported to me your conduct on the disastrous days before Plevna, in succouring wounded Russian soldiers under heavy fire. As the head of the State, I desire to testify how Russia honours your conduct by bestowing on you the order of St. Stanislaus with the crossed swords, a decoration never conferred save for personal bravery!"

During all the days of unsuccessful fighting before Plevna, in the great September struggle, the Emperor was almost continually on the field. So sure had the Russians been of winning, and so complete had been their arrangements, that a little observatory had been erected on a commanding elevation, with a luncheon-

table constantly spread, in a marquee behind, which was very much frequented by the Emperor's military *entourage.* As for the Emperor, he neither ate nor drank. I watched him on the balcony of his observatory on the afternoon of the fifth day of the fighting—his own *fête* day, save the mark!—gazing out with haggard eager eyes at the efforts to storm the great Grivitza redoubt. As the Turkish rifle fire sheared down his Russians while they strove to struggle up the slope slippery already with Roumanian blood, the pale face quivered, and the tall majestic figure visibly winced and cowered. He stood alone and self-centred, obviously impressed with the lurid horror of the scene.

When Plevna had fallen, I accompanied the Russian Emperor on his return to St. Petersburg, and was an eye-witness of the fervid cordiality of his reception. From the railway station, he drove straight to the Kazan Cathedral in accordance with the custom which prescribes to Russian emperors that in setting out for or returning from any important enterprise, they shall kiss the glittering image of the Holy Virgin of Kazan, which the cathedral enshrines. Its interior was a marvellous spectacle. People had spent the night sleeping on the marble floor that they might be sure of a place on the morrow. There had been no respect of persons in the admissions. The mujik in his sheep-skins stood next the soldier-noble whose bosom glittered with decorations. The peasant woman and the princess knelt together at the same shrine. In stately procession the

Emperor reached the altar, bent his head, and his lips touched the sacred image. When he turned to leave the building, the wildest confusion of enthusiasm laid hold of the throng. His people closed in about the Tzar till he had no power to move. The great struggle was but to touch him, and the chaos of policemen, officers, shrieking women, and enthusiastic peasants swayed and heaved to and fro; the Emperor in the midst, pale, his lips trembling with emotion—just as I had seen him when his troops were cheering him in the battle-field—struggling for the bare ability to move, for he was lifted clean off his feet and whirled about helplessly. At length, extricated by a wedge of officers, he reached his carriage, only to experience as wonderful a reception when he reached the raised portico of the Winter Palace. As for his daughter-in-law, the Tzarevna of the period, now the Empress Dowager, her experiences were unique. As her carriage approached the terrace, the populace utilised it as a convenience whence to see and cheer the Emperor. Men scrambled on to the horses, the box, the roof, the wheels; progress became utterly impracticable. A bevy of cadets and students who lined the foot of the terrace, were equal to the occasion. They opened her carriage-door by dint of great exertion, they lifted out the bright little lady who clearly was enjoying the fun greatly, and they passed her from hand to hand above their heads till the Emperor caught her, lifted her over the balustrades, and set her down by his side

on the terrace. I saw the metal heels of her remarkably neat boots sparkling in the winter sunshine over the heads of the throng.

In many respects the monarch whom the Nihilists slew was a grand man. He was absolutely free from that corruption which is the blackest curse of Russia, and which still taints the nearest relatives of the Great White Tzar. Alexander had the purest aspirations to do his duty towards the vast empire over which he ruled, and never did he spare himself in toilsome work. He took few pleasures; the melancholy of his position made sombre his features and darkened for him much of the brightness of life. For he had the bitterest consciousness of the abuses that were gradually alienating the subjects who had been wont from their hearts to couple the names of "God and the Tzar." He knew how the nation writhed and groaned; and he, absolute despot though he was, writhed and groaned no less, in the realisation of his impotency to ameliorate the evils. For, although honest and sincerely well-intentioned, Alexander had a taint of weakness in his character. True, he began his reign with a show of self-assertion, but then unworthy favourites gained his ear, his family compassed him about; the whole huge stubborn *vis inertiæ* of immemorial rottenness and tenacious officialism lay doggedly athwart the hard path of reform. Alexander's aspirations were powerless to pierce the dense solid obstacle; and his powerlessness to do this, with the dis-

quieting self-consciousness that it behoved him to do it, embittered his whole later life. In the end, the man who was once a reformer, died a tyrant.

One of poor MacGahan's most sanguine beliefs was that a time would come, if the Millennium did not intervene, when the war correspondent should overhang the battle-field in a captive balloon, gazing down on the scene through a big telescope, and telegraphing a narrative of the combat as it progressed, through a wire with one end in the balloon and the other in the nearest telegraph office. I don't profess to be very sanguine myself that this elaboration of system will ever be carried into effect; and I think, on the whole, I should prefer, were it attempted, that some one else should conduct the aërial service. But I remember once beating time, or at least apparent time, in a curiously remarkable fashion, in the transmission across the world of war news by means of the telegraph wire. In the early morning of November 22nd, 1878, a column of British troops gained possession of the fortress of Ali Musjid, up in the throat of the Khyber Pass. I rode back ten miles to the nearest field telegraph office at Jumrood, and sent the tidings to England, in a short message bearing date 10 a.m. There is five hours' difference of time between India and England, in favour of the latter; and newspapers containing this telegram, dated 10 a.m., were selling in London at 8 a.m.—two hours of apparent time before it was despatched. Nor

was this all. Owing to the five hours' difference of time between London and New York, it was in time for the regular editions of the New York papers of the same morning. The message was immediately wired across the American continent; and owing to the difference in time between the Atlantic coast and the Pacific slope, the early-rising citizen of San Francisco purchasing his morning paper at 6 a.m., was able to read the announcement of an event actually occurring two hours later in apparent time 15,000 miles away on the other side of the globe from the fair city inside the Golden Gate. Puck professed his ability to put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes: but this telegram sped some two-thirds round the earth in two hours less than no time at all.

During a lull in the fighting in Afghanistan in the winter of 1878-79, I made a hurried run across the Bay of Bengal to Burma, and ascended the river Irrawady to Mandlay, the capital of native Burma, for the purpose of learning something of the now dethroned King Theebau, who had then recently succeeded to the titles of Lord of the White Elephants, Monarch of the Golden Umbrella, and all the rest of it. Theebau, when I worshipped the Golden Feet, had not yet begun to massacre his sisters and his cousins and his aunts, who were all kept in durance waiting for their doom in a building within the palace enclosure. He courteously postponed that atrocity until I had quitted his tawdry

capital, but perpetrated it before I had reached Calcutta on my return to India. It was said, I question if truthfully, that he had subsequently taken to drink and became bloated, under the provocation of what may be called a double-barrelled mother-in-law, for the unfortunate Theebau was married to both the lady's daughters; but when I had the honour of making his acquaintance, he looked a manly, frank-faced young fellow, with a good forehead, clear steady eyes, and a firm but pleasant mouth. He received me, not in state, but quite informally in a kiosk in the garden of his palace, dressed in a white silk jacket, and a petticoat robe of rich yellow and green satin. A herald, lying prone on his stomach, introduced me in the following portentous apostrophe—

"Archibald Forbes, a great newspaper teacher of the *Daily News* of London, tenders to his Most Glorious Excellent Majesty, Lord of the Ishaddan, King of Elephants, Master of many White Elephants, Lord of the Mines of Gold and Silver, Rubies, Amber, and the noble Serpentine, Sovereign of the Empires of Thunaparanta and Tampadipa, and other great Empires and Countries, and of all the umbrella-wearing chiefs, the Supporter of Religion, the Sun-Descended Monarch, Arbiter of Life, and great righteous King, King of Kings and Possessor of boundless dominions and supreme wisdom—the following presents."

My presents were not of much account, but at least they were genuine, which was more than could be said

for the Burmese monarch's return gifts. Among these was a ring of great size and seeming splendour. I looked upon myself as provided for for life: but my suspicious servant took the precaution of submitting it to a jeweller and having it priced. He returned with melancholy and disgust stamped on his swarthy but expressive countenance. The ring was worth but thirty shillings. In fact it was a "duffer." I set down the Lord of the Great White Elephant as a fraud. Indeed, the Great White Elephant was a fraud himself. I went to see the royal brute in the gilded pagoda which was his palace. I saw a lean, mangy, dun-coloured animal, with evil little red eyes, and dingy white patches on his head and trunk. And now the Great White Elephant, sold once to Barnum, is dead of white paint on the skin; Theebau is dethroned and a state prisoner; and his territory, to the great advantage of the people who were once his subjects, is incorporated into our ever-growing Indian Empire.

I have already told how the war correspondent learns to be a cook after a fashion, and, in truth, he finds it convenient to be a sort of jack-of-all-trades. Among other acquisitions, he has ample opportunity for picking up an elementary knowledge of rough surgery. Occasions in battles are frequent when no surgeon is near, and when the correspondent, having no fighting to do, is free to concern himself with aiding the wounded, and may have the happy chance to save human life. In

the absence of professional appliances he may have to resort to curious impromptu expedients. During one of the expeditions in the winter Afghan campaign we were marching down the bed of a mountain-torrent, on each side of which rose precipitous crags. Suddenly the head of the column emerged from the gorge into a little open space. There came a ragged volley down upon us from a handful of Afghans perched high up among the rocks above. A private soldier marching by my side, fell across my path, shot through the thigh. Assisted by a young soldier I cut the cloth from the fallen man's leg, and found that he was bleeding very fast. No tourniquet was accessible, nor was any surgeon in the vicinity; so, closing with my thumbs both orifices of the wound, I directed my assistant to find two round stones and get out the surgical bandage which every soldier carries in the field. Just as I raised a thumb for him to introduce a stone, there came a second volley from the Afghans above. The young soldier hastily ran to cover, and I had no alternative, if I were not to allow the wounded man to bleed to death, but to remain pressing my thumbs on the orifices, kneeling out in the open under a dropping fire from the native gentlemen on the rocks above. After some minutes, a detachment, climbing the crags, gradually drove the enemy away; whereupon I was able to complete my rough operation and to get my patient comfortably on a stretcher. I was naturally proud that when the surgeons came to see to him an hour later, they found

that my device had effectually arrested the bleeding, and that they did not think it necessary to interfere with my bandaging; nor, surely, was I less proud when the general in command did me the honour to mention me in his despatch, on account of the little service which I had the good fortune to render.

I had not reached South Africa when there occurred that ghastly misfortune, the massacre of Isandlwana. But I accompanied the first party that visited that Aceldama, and the spectacle which it presented I can never forget. A thousand corpses had been lying there in rain and sun for four long months. The dead lay as they had fallen, for, strange to relate, the vultures of Zululand, that will reduce a dead ox to a skeleton in a few hours, had apparently never touched the corpses of our ill-fated countrymen. In the precipitous ravine at the base of the slope stretching down from the crest on which stood the abandoned waggons, dead men lay thick—mere bones, with toughened discoloured skin like leather covering them and clinging tight to them, the flesh all wasted away. I forbear to describe the faces, with their blackened features, and beards blanched by rain and sun. The clothes had lasted better than the poor bodies they covered, and helped to keep the skeletons together. All the way up the slope I traced, by the ghastly token of dead men, the fitful line of flight. It was like a long string with knots in it, the string formed of single corpses, the knots of clusters of

dead, where, as it seemed, little groups must have gathered to make a hopeless, gallant stand, and so die.

Still following the trail of dead bodies through long rank grass and among stones, I approached the crest. Here the slaughtered dead lay very thick, so that the string became a broad belt. On the bare ground, on the crest itself, among the waggons, the dead were less thick; but on the slope beyond, on which from the crest we looked down, the scene was the saddest, and more full of weird desolation than anything I had ever gazed upon. There was none of the stark, blood-curdling horror of a recent battle-field; no pools of yet wet blood; no torn flesh still quivering. Nothing of all that makes the scene of a yesterday's battle so repulsive shocked the senses. A strange dead calm reigned in this solitude of nature. Grain had grown luxuriantly round and under the waggons, sprouting from the seed that had dropped from the loads, fallen on soil fertilised by the life-blood of gallant men. So long in places had grown the grass that it mercifully shrouded the dead, who for four long months had been scandalously left unburied.

As one strayed aimlessly about, one stumbled in the grass over skeletons that rattled to the touch. Here lay a corpse with a bayonet jammed into the mouth up to the socket, transfixing the head and mouth a foot into the ground. There lay a form that seemed cosily curled in calm sleep, turned almost on its face; but seven assegai stabs had pierced the back. It was the

miserablest work wandering about the desolate camp, amid the sour odour of stale death, and gathering sad relics, letters from home, photographs, and blood-stained books.

After many delays the day at length came when, as our little army camped on the White Umvaloosi, there lay on the bosom of the wide plain over against us the great circular kraal of Ulundi, King Cetewayo's capital. After two days' futile delay, on the third morning the force crossed the river and moved across the plain, preserving in its march the formation of a great square, until a suitable spot was reached whereon to halt and accept the assault of the Zulu hordes which were showing in dense black masses all around. This point attained, the whole force then halted. Already there had been ringing out around the moving square the rattle of the musketry fire of Redvers Buller's horsemen, as they faced and stung the ingathering impis that had suddenly darkened the green face of the plain. A few yards beyond the front stood the ruins of a mission station. The mouldering walls were ordered to be levelled, lest they should obstruct the fire; and the sappers went to work with a will. But there lay within those walls a ghastly something that was not to be buried by the clay crumbling under the pick-axe—the horribly mutilated form of one of Buller's men, who had fallen in the reconnaissance of the day before. The mangled corpse was lifted out; half a dozen men with spades dug a shallow grave. The chaplain, who

had donned his surplice, stood by the head of the grave and read the burial service, to which the shell fire of the artillery gave the stern responses, while the bullets whistled about the mourners.

The time had come. Buller's men, having done their work, galloped back into the shelter of the square till their time should come again. And lo! as they cleared the front, a living concentric wave of Zulus was disclosed. On the slope towards Ulundi the shells were crashing into the black masses that were rushing forward to the encounter. Into the hordes in front the Gatlings, with their measured volleys, were raining pitiless showers of death. Le Grice and Harness were firing steadily into the thickets of black forms showing on the left and rear. But those Zulus could die—ay, they could dare and die with a valour and devotion unsurpassed by the soldiery of any age or of any nationality. They went down in numbers; but numbers stood up and pressed swiftly and steadily on. The sharper din of our musketry fire filled the intervals between the hoarse roar of the cannon and the scream of the speeding shells. Still the Zulus would not stay the whirlwind of their converging attack. They fired and rushed on, halting to fire again, and then rushing on time after time. There were those who had feared lest the sudden confront with the fierce Zulu rush should try the nerves of our beardless lads; but the British soldier was true to his manly traditions when he found himself in the open and saw his enemy face to face in the daylight. For half an

hour the square stood grim and purposeful, steadfastly pouring the sleet of death from every face. There was scarce any sound of human speech, save the quiet injunctions of the officers—"Fire low, men; get your aim, no wildness!" On the little rise in the centre the surgeons were plying their duties, regardless of the bullets that whistled about them. The Zulus could not get to close quarters simply because of the sheer weight of our fire. The canister tore through them like a harrow through weeds; the rockets ravaged their zigzag path through the masses. One rush came within a few yards, but it was the last effort of the heroic Zulus. Their noble ardour could not endure in the face of the appliances of civilised warfare. They began to waver. The time for the cavalry had at last come. Lord Chelmsford caught the moment. Drury Lowe was sitting on his charger, watching with ears and eyes intent for the word. It came at last tersely—"Off with you!" The infantrymen made a gap for the Lancers, and gave them, too, a cheer as they galloped out into the open —knees well into saddles, right hands with a firm grip of the lances down at the "engage." Drury Lowe collected his chestnut into a canter, and glancing over his shoulder gave the commands: "At a gollop; Front form troops!" and then "Front form line!" You may swear there was no dallying over these evolutions; just one pull to steady the cohesion, and then, with an eager quiver in the voice, "Now for it, my lads, charge!" The Zulus strove to gain the rough ground, but the Lancers

were upon them and among them before they could clear the long grass of the plain. It did one good to see the glorious old "white arm" reassert once again its pristine prestige.

Lord Chelmsford, on the evening of the battle, announced that he did not intend to despatch a courier until the following morning with the intelligence of the victory, which was conclusive and virtually terminated the war. So I hardened my heart, and determined to go myself, and that at once. The distance to Landmanns Drift, where was the nearest telegraph office, was about one hundred miles; and the route lay through a hostile region, with no road save that made on the grass by our waggon wheels as the column had marched up. It was necessary to skirt the sites of recently burned Zulu kraals, the dwellers in which were likely to have resumed occupation. The dispersal of the Zulu army by the defeat of the morning made it all but certain that stragglers would be prowling in the bush through which lay the first part of my ride. Young Lysons offered to bet me even that I would not get through, and when I accepted, genially insisted that I should stake the money, since he did not expect to see me any more. It was somewhat gruesome work, that first stretch through the sullen gloom of the early night, as I groped my way through the rugged bush trying to keep the trail of the waggon wheels. I could see the dark figures of Zulus up against the blaze of the fires in the destroyed kraals to right and to left of my track,

and their shouts came to me on the still night air. At length I altogether lost my way, and there was no resource but to halt until the moon should rise and show me my whereabouts. The longest twenty minutes I ever spent in my life was while sitting on my trembling horse in a little open glade of the bush, my hand on the butt of my revolver, waiting for the moon's rays to flash down into the hollow. At length they came; I discerned the right direction, and in half an hour more I was inside the reserve camp of Etonganeni imparting the tidings to a circle of eager listeners. The great danger was then past; it was a comparatively remote chance that I should meet with molestation during the rest of the journey, although Lieutenant Scott-Elliott and Corporal Cotter were cut up on the same track the same night. The exertion was prolonged and arduous, but the recompense was adequate. I had the good fortune to be thanked for the tidings I had brought by the General Commanding-in-Chief and by her Majesty's High Commissioner for British South Africa; and it was something for a correspondent to be proud of that it was his narrative of the combat and of the victory which Her Majesty's Ministers read to both Houses of Parliament, as the only intelligence which had been received up to date.

It may perhaps have occurred to some among those who may have done me the honour to read this chapter that the profession of war correspondent is a somewhat

wearing one, calculated to make a man old before his time, and not to be pursued with any satisfaction or credit by any one who is not in the full heyday of physical and mental vigour. My personal experience is that ten years of toil, exposure, hardship, anxiety and brain-strain, such as the electric fashion of modern war correspondence exacts, suffice to impair the hardiest organisation. But given health and strength, it used to be an avocation of singular fascination. I do not know whether this attribute in its fulness remains with it under the limitations of freedom of action which are now in force.

II.

MOLTKE BEFORE METZ.

The German "Staff History."—Moltke's posthumous "Franco-German War."—Saarbrücken and the Spicheren.—The Battle of Vionville-Mars-la-Tour.—Moltke's estimate of the respective strengths in the Battle of St. Privat-Gravelotte.—Moltke's dislike to Prince Frederic Charles.—The latter's fierce gallop.—The Battle of Gravelotte.—The charge of the French from Point-du-Jour.—Moltke at the head of the Second Corps.—The horrors of Sedan.

LORD WOLSELEY has characterised the German "Staff History of the Franco-German War" as a "weariness of the flesh." This is a hard saying, and, I respectfully submit, scarcely a just one. Necessarily minute in detail, the narrative of the "History" is always lucid, and there are few pages which are not illuminated by brilliant flashes of picturesque description that stir the blood like the sound of a trumpet. Apart from those "purple patches," in reading which one feels to hear the turmoil of the battle, the shouts of the combatants, the groans of the wounded, the scream of the shells, and the venomous whistle and sullen thud of the bullets, there are frequent stretches of disquisitional and elucidatory matter which are pregnant with sustained and almost majestic power and vigour; instinct with masterly thought and close reasoning, clothed in a style

of singular simplicity, directness, and virile eloquence. Even if it were not an open secret that those passages —halting-grounds of instruction and reflection, studding the swinging march of minutely detailed action—came from the pen of the man who wielded the direction of the war, their intrinsic stamp of high, calm authority, disclosing in the writer the conceiver and the orderer, not less than the identity of the style with that of Moltke's "Russo-Turkish Campaign of 1828—29," would betray their authorship.

But if one may deprecate the strength of Lord Wolseley's expression, Moltke himself is found to a considerable extent in accord with the English soldier-author. Proud as he was of the full adequateness of the "Staff History," he owned that "it is for the greater number of readers too detailed, and written too technically," and he recognised that "an abstract of it must be made some day." Of all men Moltke himself was plainly the man, not indeed to confine himself to an "abstract," but to write a concise history of the war, based chiefly on the authentic "Staff History" record, but infused also with his own unique knowledge of men and things, of springs of action and motives; revealing certain phases, in a word, of the inner history of the momentous period in which he was something more than merely one of the chief actors. His modesty, his dislike to personality even when not of an offensive kind, his detestation of gossip, were recognised characteristics; but he quite justly did not regard them as

hindering him from writing the bright and amusing sketch of his personal experiences in the battle of Königgrätz, and the personally vindicatory denial of councils-of-war in 1866 and 1870—71 printed as appendices to his "Franco-German War" volume. Amidst the wealth of curious inner history of which this quiet, reticent old man was the repository, and which only now is gradually becoming divulged, there was, of course, much that could not then, or, indeed, ever be revealed; but beyond question there was much which, so far as principle and even policy were concerned, he needed not to reserve. And a book on the Great War, written not only for soldiers but for the nations, illuminated by the perspicuity and graceful strength of style that marked Moltke's previous works, enriched with such personal estimates of men and with such revelations of inner history as he could legitimately have made—would not that book have shared immortality with Xenophon's "Anabasis," with Cæsar's "Commentaries" on an earlier Gallic War, with Napier's "History of Wellington's Peninsular Campaigns?"

Such a book Moltke might have written, and could have written had he chosen. Whether he could have done so when, at the age of eighty-seven, he yielded to his nephew's entreaties, and began the work which was given to the world after the ending of a life so full of years and honours, is a question that cannot be conclusively answered. It is sufficient to say that he did not do this, nor attempt to do it. In the main, in the

book he did write, he clung to his conception of an "abstract" of the "Staff History." While he followed that guide—virtually following himself as he was when his years had been fewer—he was on sure ground; and he followed it so closely that in three out of four of his pages there is the distinct echo of the "Staff History," the actual words of which, indeed, are adopted with great frequency. When he turned away from that lamp to his path, he did not uniformly maintain entire accuracy of statement. His style, though mostly retaining its directness and simplicity, is sometimes obscure; and its dryness and absence of relief betray a certain tiredness. His nephew holds that the work, "which," he says, "was undertaken in all simplicity of purpose as a popular history," is practically the expression of Moltke's personal opinions from his own standpoint as chief of the general staff. On this it may be remarked that the book he wrote in his extreme old age, entitled "History of the Franco-German War of 1870—71," exhibits no single element of a "popular history;" and that Moltke's statements are most open to question in the few passages in which he is transparently writing as the chief of staff.

How powerful is the glamour of Moltke's name was evinced in the all but unanimous gush of indiscriminate and uncritical eulogy with which this posthumous book was received. His prestige is so high that it is probable the work might be accepted both by writers and by students of war as absolutely accurate. It may not be

considered as quite sacrilegious if one who was an eye-witness of the Franco-German War, who had the honour of some personal intercourse with Count Moltke in the course of that war, and who has studied that great personage in his various characters as organiser, strategist, writer, and man, should venture to point out some errors in his "Franco-German War." It is not proposed to follow him beyond the first period of the campaign, which closed with the elimination of the French regular army from the theatre of actual war by the capitulation of Sedan.

Moltke states that on the 2nd of August, 1870, the German garrison evacuated Saarbrücken, "after a gallant defence and repeated counter-strokes." Gallant front, quaint, cheery, dashing Von Pestel did maintain, facing for fourteen days with his battalion of infantry and three squadrons of Uhlans, the French masses gathered on the Spicherenberg over against the little open town at scarcely more than chassepôt-fire distance, and craftily displaying his handful so that companies seemed battalions and his battalion a brigade at the least. Gallant and prolonged defence Gneisenau and he did make when at length, under the eyes of their Emperor and his son, Frossard's three French divisions streamed down from their upland and swept across the valley on the 1,500 Rhinelanders calmly holding the little town. But there were no "counter-strokes" on the part of the German defenders, which would have been, indeed, as futile as foolish. For several hours two bat-

talions of Prussians fended off three divisions of Frenchmen who vacillated in their enterprise, and then they withdrew leisurely and in order. The only semblance of a "counter-stroke" was made by one man, and that man a British officer—Wigram Battye of the "Guides," who died fighting in Afghanistan in the early campaign of 1879. Battye was with a Prussian company which was just withdrawing from an advanced position. A soldier was shot down by his side, whereupon Battye, rebelling vehemently against the retirement, snatched the dead man's needle-gun and pouch-belt, ran out into the open, dropped on one knee, and opened fire on Pouget's brigade. Pouget's brigade responded with alacrity, and presently Battye was bowled over by a chassepôt bullet in the ribs. A German professor and a brother-Briton ran out and brought him in, conveyed him to a village in the rear, plastered layer upon layer of stiff brown paper over the damaged ribs, and started him in a waggon to the Kreuznach hospital.

The battle of Spicheren was an unpremeditated fight, and like most contests of that character, was extremely confused, a real "soldiers' battle," in which generalship played but a subsidiary part. From the first, writes Moltke, an intermixture of battalions and companies set in, which increased with every repulse; and the confusion, he adds, was increased by the circumstance that three generals in succession nominally swayed the command. He might have said with truth that not three

but five generals were successively in command on this afternoon of desperate strife. Kameke began the battle; Stülpnagel arrived and superseded him in virtue of seniority; later came Zastrow, who, as full general and corps-commander, superseded Stülpnagel in virtue of superior rank. Presently came Goeben and took command as being a senior general to Zastrow; and as the fighting was dying down, Steinmetz, who was an army commander and senior general, relieved Goeben and took over the command. Moltke, writing of the French possibilities on the day of Spicheren (August 6th), makes the statement that, since four French corps, the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and guard, were lying within a short day's march of Frossard's corps (the 2nd) on the Spicheren heights, the French Emperor, had he chosen, would have been fully able to collect five corps for a battle in the Cocheren region, five miles in Frossard's rear. But when he wrote this, he must have forgotten that in a previous page he had stated that the 5th corps (De Failly) had been assigned to the separate army which Marshal MacMahon commanded in Alsace; and it must have escaped his memory also, that on this very August 6th Lespart's Division of that corps was hurrying from Bitche towards Wörth, eager to participate in the battle raging there.

In his sketch of the battle of Vionville-Mars-la-Tour (16th August), Moltke states as follows, in regard to the 3rd German Army Corps: "It was not until after three

p.m., after it had been fighting almost single-handed for seven hours, that effective assistance was approaching." But the 3rd Corps did not come into action until after ten a.m.; and from ten a.m. until three p.m. is only five hours. The 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions were on the battle-field considerably in advance of the arrival of the 3rd Corps. The horse-guns of the 5th Division were shelling Murat's camp near Vionville so early as half-past eight; and by nine Rauch's troopers of the 6th Division were falling fast under the fire of French infantry on the edge of the wood of Vionville. The two Divisions in conjunction had formed a wide semi-circle round the French flank and front, and, although yielding naturally to the pressure of heavy chassepôt fire, were in a measure "holding" Frossard's prompt infantry when the leading troops of the German 3rd Corps reached the field. Moltke entirely ignores this seasonable early work of the two Cavalry Divisions, which is described with full appreciation in the "Staff History." Throughout the hours specified both of them were continually under fire, and almost continuously in action, now supplying the place of infantry in constituting Alvensleben's second line, now engaged in independent fighting. When the crisis came, while as yet the day was young; when four French Army Corps were threatening to crush Alvensleben's depleted Divisons; when that commander stood committed up to the hilt—"no infantry, not a man in reserve"—all succour yet distant; there remained to him but one

expedient which might avert the imminent defeat. That was the resort to a vigorous cavalry attack, "in which the troopers must charge home, and, if necessary, should and must sacrifice themselves." How Bredow's horsemen fulfilled the stern behest, and of what momentous service was their devotion unto death, the Fatherland will never forget. But while the gallant *Reiter* of the two cavalry divisions were thus doing and dying, and when it is remembered that an infantry brigade of the 10th Corps had joined Alvensleben before noon, was it either true or just to claim for the 3rd Corps, whose constancy and devotion were superb, that it had been fighting until three o'clock "almost single-handed, and without any effective support?" How perfunctory is Moltke's sketch of this stupendous conflict, of which he was not a witness, may be estimated from the fact that he makes no reference whatsoever to the participation in the battle of portions of the 8th and 9th Corps, whose attitude and action mainly caused Bazaine to withhold troops from his front in order to reinforce his left and protect his communications with Metz, threatened by the troops referred to, which lost 1,200 of their strength.

Moltke makes some very remarkable statements in regard to the respective strengths of the armies which fought in the battle of St. Privat-Gravelotte. The French army which capitulated at Metz in October, he writes, numbered 173,000, "besides 20,000 sick who

could not be removed; about 200,000 in all." And he builds on this foundation, which is in itself erroneous, the assertion that "consequently the enemy in the battle of 18th August had at disposal more than 180,000 men." He thus continues: "The exact strength of the eight* German Corps on that day amounted to 178,818. Thus, with the forces on either side of approximately equal strength, the French had been driven from a position of unsurpassed advantage." The terms used here can have but one meaning: that the French army was over 180,000 strong, and the German army exactly 178,818 strong. And that being so, the thousand or two of asserted French superiority counting for nothing, the two adversaries were, in a numerical sense, equally matched.

It was thus claimed, and that with all the prestige of Moltke's name in support, that the German strength in the battle of 18th August was not superior to that of the French. That the claim was untenable can be shown easily and convincingly. That Moltke greatly understated the German strength needs little further evidence than the following brief extract from the official "return, showing number of (German) troops employed in the battle of St. Privat-Gravelotte," printed in the appendices to the second volume of the "Staff History."

* Moltke had inadvertently written "seven"; there were eight, —Guards, 2nd, 3rd, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 12th. The official state gives 178,818 as the collective strength of those eight corps.

TOTAL STRENGTH.

	Combatants, exclusive of officers and train.		
	Infantry and Pioneers.	Cavalry.	Horsed Guns.
First army	42,455	5,753	180
Second army . . .	136,363	18,831	546
Total	178,818	24,584	726

Moltke, it will be seen, put forward the gross infantry strength of its eight corps, exclusive of officers, as the total strength of the German army on the field of battle. The addition of the cavalry, without reckoning officers, at once swells the total to 203,400. The Germans reckon their artillery by guns, not by gunners. While the latter are still hale and sound they do not show in the returns; but when killed or wounded they figure among the losses, an arrangement which seems anomalous. But as artillery is of no use without artillerymen, the men of that arm must obviously count in the actual strength of an army. In 1870 each German army corps before Metz had an artillery regiment 3,981 strong, so that the artillerymen of the eight corps on the field on the 18th of August would, at full strength, number 31,848. Making a very liberal deduction for previous casualties, there would remain 25,000, swelling the total army strength, exclusive of officers and train, to 228,400. Officers are not included in the figures

of the above return; but they were unquestionably in the battle, and come within the count. Apart from artillery officers, who perhaps were included in their regiments, and not reckoning general and staff officers, the fifty-two infantry regiments and the 148 squadrons composing the infantry and cavalry forces of the army had about 4,000 officers on their establishments, of whom 400 may be written off for casualties. Adding, then, 3,600 officers to the previous count of 228,400, the German host "employed" in the battle of St. Privat-Gravelotte numbered, not as Moltke reckoned it for an obvious purpose, at a total of 178,818, but a total of 232,000 men; and, so far from the contending armies being of approximately equal strength, the Germans were stronger by at least 50,000 than were the French, even if Moltke's estimate of the numbers of the latter were correct.

But his estimate of the French strength was not correct—it could not, indeed, in the nature of things, have been correct. Apart from the incidental miscalculation that 173,000+20,000 make 200,000, Moltke erred in his statement that the 20,000 sick and wounded French soldiers found in Metz at the capitulation were in excess of the 173,000 officers and men recorded as having surrendered. The sick and wounded were included in the latter total, which comprehended every man, combatant and non-combatant, of the army and garrison of Metz at the date of the capitulation on the 29th of October. Moltke's train of argument that, since there were

173,000 French soldiers in Metz at that date, "consequently" 180,000 French soldiers confronted the German army in the battle of Gravelotte, it is impossible to follow. The number of French soldiers, effective and ineffective, in and about Metz and on the battle-field on the morning of Gravelotte, was, roughly, about 200,000. But deductions to the amount of 58,000 must be made as follows: wounded of previous battles, 20,000; mobiles constituting garrison of fortress and forts, 20,000; Laveaucoupet's regular division stiffening mobile garrisons, 5,000; departments, train, stragglers, etc., certainly over 8,000; sick, 5,000.

Giving effect to those deductions, the conclusion is, that about 142,000 French soldiers were "employed" in the battle, including the reserve consisting of the Imperial Guard which had three of its four brigades engaged. This reckoning accords with great closeness to the statement of the efficient strength of the Army of the Rhine given in to Marshal Bazaine four days after the battle of the 18th. The number of all ranks, according to the statement, was 137,728; adding to which the 7,800 killed and wounded in the battle, the French strength on the morning of the 18th works out at 145,528; the difference between that amount and the strength at the October capitulation consisting of garrison troops and casualties before and after Gravelotte. The statements by the French of their strength at Gravelotte range from 100,000 to 150,000 men effective, which latter estimate, made by a Frenchman whose

figures were accepted as quasi-official in the "Staff History," had been the highest until Moltke overtopped it by 30,000. The official German statement is that the French "had an *available* force of from 125,000 to 150,000 men." Moltke did not claim any new information after authorising the statement quoted above; his swollen total was based on the capitulation figures, which were public property the day after the surrender. And a certain inconsistency reveals itself between that swollen total and the result of his statement that there were eight to ten men to every pace of the seven miles along which extended the front of the French position. At ten men to the pace there works out a total of 133,200 men—which contrasts somewhat abruptly with "more than 180,000."

In his preface to his uncle's posthumous book, Major von Moltke quotes an utterance of his great relative as "highly characteristic of Moltke's magnanimity." This is the utterance: "Whatever is published in a military history is always dressed for effect; yet it is a duty of piety and patriotism never to impair the prestige which identifies the glory of our Army with personages of lofty position." The *naïveté* is edifying with which the principle is in effect laid down, that truth must go to the wall in favour of patriotism. The supersession of truth by the other virtue is not precisely a novelty; but to Moltke belonged the frank avowal of the preference as a sacred duty, and to his nephew the characterisation of this avowal as magnanimity. Throughout

his book Moltke was true to his principle except as regarded two leading actors in the great drama, of whom he himself was one and Prince Frederic Charles the other. The strange fact is that, as I believe can be clearly shown, the strictures in both instances are unmerited.

It never was any secret in the German Army that Moltke disliked Prince Frederic Charles. There could be nothing in common between the composed, refined, accomplished and pious Moltke, fastidious, scholarly and reserved as he was; and the bluff, coarse, dictatorial, loose-lived and loose-mouthed Frederic Charles. They met as seldom as possible, and their relations were always confined to the strictest formality. To do the Red Prince justice, he always admired the military genius of Moltke; but Moltke, from his methodical and exacting standard and notwithstanding his cold, unemotional impartiality, had not a high opinion of Prince Frederic Charles as a commander. In reality, as but for a rare prejudice Moltke would have discerned, the two men were the complement of each other. Moltke directed the storm and swayed the whirlwind, although he habitually rode outside of its vortex. The Red Prince was the storm itself—the actual mighty rushing whirlwind, "a disciplined thunderbolt," as I once heard a cuirassier trooper of the Zieten Hussars describe him. Perhaps his dislike to and non-appreciation of Frederic Charles was Moltke's weak point; and thence probably it was that he violated in the case of that Royal soldier

his principle of upholding the prestige of "high-placed" warriors.

Moltke is nearing the end of his description of the battle of Vionville-Mars-la-Tour. He has just finished a sketch of the great cavalry fight, which he records was at its height at a quarter to seven in the evening. And he continues thus: "*Prince Frederic Charles had hastened to the battle-field.* The day was near its ending, darkness was approaching, the battle was won." Does not the reader gather from the sentence in italics —the italics are mine—from the mentioned hour preceding that sentence, and from the words that follow it, that Prince Frederic Charles reached the field late—when it was falling dark, and when already the battle had been won? The absence of precision tends to mislead. For the Prince, as a fact, was late in reaching the field. The battle had begun two hours before noon; nearly five hours later Prince Frederic Charles was still in Pont-à-Mousson, quite fifteen miles from the scene of struggle. As is duly recorded in the "Staff History," the Prince reached the battle-field "about four o'clock."

It was barely that hour when he came galloping up the narrow hill-road from Gorze; the powerful bay he rode all foam and sweat, sobbing with the swift exertion up the steep ascent, yet pressed ruthlessly with the spur; staff and escort panting several horse-lengths in rear of the impetuous foremost horseman. On and up he sped, craning forward over the saddle-bow to save his horse, but the attitude seeming to suggest that he burned to

project himself faster than the good horse could cover the ground. No wolfskin, but the red tunic of the Zieten Hussars, clad the compact torso, but the straining man's face wore the aspect one associates with that of the berserker. The turgid eyeballs had in them a sullen lurid gleam of blood-thirst. The fierce sun and the long hard gallop had flushed the face a deep red, and the veins of the throat were visibly swollen. Recalling through the years the memory of that visage with the lowering brow, the fierce eyes, and the strong set jaw, one can understand how to this day the mothers in the Lorraine villages invoke the terror of *"Le Prince Rouge,"* as the Scottish peasants of old used the name of the Black Douglas, to awe their children wherewithal into panic-stricken silence. While as yet his road was through the forest, leaves and twigs cut by bullets showered down upon him. Just as he emerged in the open upland, a shell burst almost among his horse's feet. The iron-nerved man gave heed to neither bullet-fire nor bursting shell; no, nor even to the cheers that rose above the roar of battle from the throats of the Brandenburgers through whose masses he was riding, and whose chief he had been for many years. They expected no recognition, for they understood the nature of the man—knew that after his rough fashion he was the soldier's true friend, and also that he was wont to sway the issues of battle. He spurred onward to Flavigny away yonder in the front line; the bruit of his coming darted along the fagged ranks; and strangely

soon came the recognition that a master-soldier had gripped hold of the command as in a vice.

In regard once again to Prince Frederic Charles, Moltke deviates from the principle which he expounded to his nephew, in relation to a critical incident which occurred later in the same evening. The long bloody struggle was in its final throes, and the Germans now stood on the ground held by the French in the morning. In those circumstances, writes Moltke:—

"It was clearly most unadvisable to challenge by renewed attacks an enemy who still greatly outnumbered the German forces; which, since no other reinforcements could be hoped for soon, could not but jeopardise the success so dearly bought. The troops were exhausted, most of their ammunition was spent, the horses had been under the saddle for fifteen hours without food. Some of the batteries could move only at a walk, and the nearest army corps which had crossed the Moselle, the 12th, was distant more than a day's march. Yet, notwithstanding, at about eight o'clock the Headquarter" ["Obercommando," an army euphemism for Prince Frederic Charles, who was no figure-head commander] "issued an order commanding a renewed and general attack upon the enemy's position."

The attack was but partially made owing to the darkness and the exhaustion of the troops, and it failed at most points, not without severe losses.

Than the aspersion conveyed in the quoted sentences, none more grave can well be imagined. The charge, in

effect, is simply this, that in a reckless attempt which in the nature of things could not be other than futile, Prince Frederic Charles had wantonly squandered the lives of his devoted soldiers. That chief had much experience of command in the actual battle-field, and he closed his fighting career unvanquished in battle. In the Franco-German War he was in his mature soldierly prime, a veteran of war at the age of forty-two, as yet unimpaired by habits which subsequently deteriorated him. Experience had inured him swiftly yet coolly to penetrate the varying problems of the battle while it raged around him in its maddest chaotic turmoil—a less easy task than meets the retrospective military critic in the calm of his bureau. He had learned the stern lesson that gains can rarely be attained without incurring losses—the old cynical omelette-making, egg-breaking axiom; and this other lesson, too, that there are occasions when a commander must lay his account with severe inevitable losses while the chances of success are very precarious, yet which it behoves him to adventure. It was such an occasion which presented itself to Prince Frederic Charles on the evening of Mars-la-Tour. With a far-spent army of some 60,000 men, he was standing right in the path of a host more than double his own numbers. Of that host it was true that probably more than one-half was not less exhausted than were his own people; but it possessed powerful reserves comparatively fresh and unscathed, the possession of which might well encourage

the French leader, with apparently so much at stake, to push a formidable night attack against a numerically inferior and worn-out adversary. Symptoms there already were, which seemed to portend such an effort. Bazaine in person, with fresh troops, was clearing his front towards the south-west, and thrusting the Germans thereabouts back into the woods. Moltke's statement is incorrect that the 12th Corps, twenty miles away, was Prince Frederic Charles' nearest reinforcement. One incentive to the operation which Moltke condemns was the Prince's knowledge that the 9th Corps was so near his right flank as to be able to make itself felt in the intended general movement. And this was actually so in the case of a brigade of that corps' Hessian Division, which came into action so early as half-past seven, and continued fighting until after ten. Part of its other division was indeed already in the field. Any argument of mine in justification of Prince Frederic Charles's motives can have no weight; and I prefer therefore to quote on this point the soldierly language of the "Staff History," compiled, it never must be forgotten, under the superintendence of Moltke himself:—

"As the firing became more vigorous after seven o'clock, and the reports gave reason to expect the arrival of the 9th Corps, Prince Frederic Charles considered the moment suitable for again making an attack in force. . . The staking of the last strength of man and horse, after hours upon hours of sanguinary fighting, was to show that the Prussians had both the ability and

the firm will to triumph in the yet undecided struggle. The moral impression of such an advance, enhanced by the consternation to be expected from a sudden attack in the twilight, appeared to guarantee a favourable result."

No word of blame has Moltke for General Manstein, who, by his headstrong and reckless disobedience of orders, and his disregard of information brought him by his own scouts, dislocated the plan of the battle of Gravelotte, and gravely compromised the fortunes of the day; no breath of reflection on General von Pape, who sacrificed thousands of brave men in a premature and impossible attack on St. Privat—too impatient to wait an hour for the development of the turning movement by the Saxons which would have averted most of the butchery. Both those officers were "personages of high position"—were of that "bestimmte Persönlichkeiten" order, to uphold whose prestige Moltke held it to be a sacred duty. Patriotism questionless shielded them from adverse comment; yet it did not avail to withhold his censure on Prince Frederic and on himself. It was in respect of the participation of the 2nd Corps in the fighting during the latest phase of the battle of Gravelotte, that he considered himself to have incurred his unfavourable criticism upon himself, which he thus frankly expresses in his posthumous work on the Franco-German War:—

"It would have been more judicious on the part of the Chief of the General Staff, who was personally on

the spot at the time, not to have permitted this movement at so late an hour. Such a body of troops, still completely intact, might have proved very precious next day, but on this evening could scarcely be expected to bring about a decisive reversal."

With all respect I make bold to aver that Moltke had no alternative but to permit—nay, to strenuously urge forward that advance of the 2nd Corps his sanction to which he disapproved many years later—if there was to be retrieved a situation which was dangerously compromised, and which imperatively called for a "reversal."

In the Gravelotte region of the vast battle-ground, the German right, consisting of the 7th and 8th Corps commanded by General Steinmetz, had been fighting fiercely and with varied fortune during the afternoon against the French soldiers of Frossard and Le Bœuf. As the day waned the cannonade abated its virulence and the musketry-fire fell almost silent. The French now lay supine in their shelter-trenches along the Point-du-Jour ridge crowning the bare glacis-like plateau which their fire had been sweeping; quiet in the buildings and behind the enclosures of the Moscou farm farther northward. The Rhinelanders and Westphalians huddled among their dead and wounded in the shallow folds of the plateau, in the bush fringing the deep and steep ravine of the Mance streamlet, in and behind the precincts of the battered St. Hubert auberge, and about the edge of the wood below Moscou. The lull lasted

for an hour; the Germans believed that the Frenchmen over against them were exhausted, and that the strength of their resistance was broken. Away to the northward where Prince Frederic Charles held sway, the roar of battle was deepening in intensity; and this indication that the army of the Red Prince was entering on the decisive struggle was the signal for the order to the impatient Steinmetz, that he too should fall on and strain his uttermost to "end the business" in his specific sphere of action. In addition to his own two corps, the 2nd was placed at his disposal, to be used if it should be needed. The Pomeranians had travelled far and fast in their soldierly ardour to share in the battle. They panted for the fray, in spite of their fatigue after a long forced march; but having regard to the seeming enfeeblement of the adversary, it was not expected that their services would be called for.

For once the French had hoodwinked their enemy. They were not exhausted, but were merely saving their ammunition and resting in the comparative safety of their shelter-trenches and reverse slopes, while they watched for events. They believed, it seemed, that they had virtually won the battle, and were in full buoyancy and confidence. As the heads of Steinmetz's columns came up out of the Mance ravine and showed themselves on the lower verge of the plateau, the French flung away the mask. Suddenly from their serried lines shot furious blasts of chassepôt- and mitrailleuse-fire. The thunder of their long-silent artillery burst forth in

fullest volume. The supports at all points came springing forward to join their comrades of the front line. And then the French infantry, for the moment relieved from the irksome trammels of the defensive and restored to its congenial *métier* of the attack, dashed forward with the grand old *élan*, and swept the Germans backwards down the slope into the Mance ravine. Under the stroke of that fierce impact, under the hurricane of missiles that swept upon the troops assailed by the French infantry, Steinmetz's army reeled to its base. There was a period when it may be said without exaggeration that the mass of that army was on the run. The old King was carried backward in the press surging out from under the rain of bullets and shells, expostulating with great fervour of expression in his rearward career, with the component parts of the all but universal *débâcle*. The Mance ravine was seething full of fugitives, struggling among themselves for cover from the plunging shells which fell thick among them. The quarries below Moscou were crowded with demoralised soldiers. The garrison of St. Hubert remained there—in the buildings and outlying enclosures it was safer than in the bullet-swept open; the place was not assailed, and some staunch troops out in the open clung to its lee. But the road in front of St. Hubert leading from Point-du-Jour down into the ravine, was a torrent of rushing, panting, panic-stricken men. Down this torrent were actually swept some of the

brave Gnügge's field guns; I saw old Brigadier Rex thrown down and overrun when striving energetically to stay the rush.

The French infantry having repulsed their adversaries, retired to their defensive positions, and the Germans began to steady themselves in a measure. Reserves of the 7th Corps were sent forward, but made very little head; and it is not straining language to say that it was as a last resort that the 2nd Corps, no part of which had hitherto been engaged, was ordered up. The corps crossed the ravine by the great *chaussée* from Gravelotte. How important was regarded a fortunate issue to its exertions was vividly betrayed by the unparalleled anxiety to fire its ardour, and the exceptional solicitude for its most effective guidance. At the head of the corps rode down into the ravine old Steinmetz the army commander, and Franseky the corps commander; and with them rode none other than Moltke himself, accompanied by the staff officers of the royal headquarters. "Under the eyes of those officers of high rank," so it is written in the "Staff History," "the battallions hastened across the valley, drums beating and bugles sounding, previous to throwing themselves into the struggle amid the encouraging cheers of the commanding general." As the Pomeranians deployed on the edge of the plateau, the French fire struck them fair in the face; and they were struck, too, by a broad, rushing stream of fugitives from the front which, in the demure language of the "Staff History," "seemed

to point to the advent of a fresh crisis in the engagement."

This last incident alone would appear to justify the utilisation of the 2nd Corps, which, although it made no serious impression on the French position, maintained a footing on the plateau during the night. But, when its employment is pronounced by the high officer who ordered it on that service to have been a surplusage and an error, a comment on this pronouncement may be made in the form of a couple of questions. Was not this the unique instance since Blücher's time of a Prussian army-commander—as Moltke virtually was —personally leading his troops into action? And on what other occasion throughout his career in his great position, did Moltke concern himself personally with the actual direction and encouragement of any specific movement on the battle-field?

The incidents narrated above are, in their broad features, recorded in the "Staff History," and some details which can be fully verified from other sources have been added, in part from personal knowledge as an eye-witness. Moltke's faculty of concentrated writing is strikingly shown in the following quotation, which embraces all he permits himself to say regarding the events adverted to:—

"Later, the still serviceable battalions of the 7th Corps were sent again across the Mance ravine, and were joined by battalions from the Bois de Vaux in the direction of Point-du-Jour and the quarries. Fros-

sard's corps, thus attacked, was reinforced by the Garde Voltigeur Division, and all the French reserves moved up into the first line. The artillery came into action with redoubled activity, and an annihilating rifle-fire was poured on the advancing Germans. Then moved out to the attack the French soldiers in the shape of a powerful mass of tirailleurs, which drove the small leaderless bands of Germans lying on the plateau back to the skirts of the wood. Here, however, the outburst was arrested, and there still remained in the hand a fresh army corps in full strength."

Moltke's estimate of Bazaine as a commander was not high, and he distinctly recognised that he was influenced by political as well as military considerations; he, however, acquits Bazaine of the charge of having betrayed his country. There is in Moltke's last work one very curious and enigmatical sentence in regard to Bazaine. The period is shortly before the battle of Noisseville, 31st August, when Bazaine and his army had been enclosed in and about Metz for several days. This is the sentence—"Meanwhile Marshal Bazaine possibly might have recognised that he had deceived himself in regard to the release of his army by means of negotiation." Is it not the reasonable inference that thus early, much earlier than ever previously had been suspected, Bazaine had attempted to open negotiations with the Germans, and had been repulsed?

As a skilful, untiring, and far-seeing organiser of the

means which make for success in war, Moltke has never had an equal, and probably, in those respects, will never have a superior. The extraordinary success of the efforts on his part and that of his coadjutor von Roon, to perfect the national preparedness for war, produced the result that while those two lasted, Germany could find in no other European power an equal antagonist. Still less has any power produced a strategist who has given proof of ranking as Moltke's peer. Thus it is impossible to gauge the full measure of Moltke's potentialities. He may have had reserves of strategical genius which never were needed to be evoked. It is impossible to determine whether in the Franco-German War he put forth his full strength, or only so much of it as was proportionate to the requirements suggested by the known inferiority of the adversary.

One thing is certain, that never was fortune more kind to the director of any great war than she was to Moltke in 1870. In spite of the significant warning of Sadowa, it seemed almost that in its later years the Second Empire, as regarded its military position, had been deliberately "riding for a fall." With the melancholy exposure of its military decadence all the world is familiar. When Marshal Niel enjoined the defensive as the complement of the chassepôt, he throttled the traditional *élan* of the soldiers of France. Her army, deficient in everything save innate courage, lacked most of all competent leadership; and the assumption of the chief command by the Emperor Napoleon made the

Germans a present of the issue before a shot was fired. The campaign begun, fortune continued to shower her favours on Moltke. It appeared as if the very stars in their courses fought for him. An essential feature of his plan was to push direct for the enemy's capital. Bazaine unwittingly helped him in this by bottling himself up in Metz, and MacMahon yielded him the fair-way by moving out of his path. Another element of Moltke's scheme was that the French should be driven from the spacious and fertile middle provinces into the barren and cramped precincts of the north. Bazaine did not lend himself directly to the accomplishment of this object of his adversary, but he disposed of himself otherwise in a manner equally satisfactory to Moltke. MacMahon obliged by going northward without being driven—at least by the Germans; his coercion was from Paris. Moltke, fully convinced of the paramount importance to the French that the army of Metz should make good its retreat on the Châlons force, concentrated every energy towards the prevention of that union. It happened that, as Moltke genially observes, Bazaine did not share the German chief's conviction, and indeed played into his adversary's hand by his preference for remaining in Metz instead of the prosecution of a retreat towards Châlons. Ready enough to fight—to do him justice—Bazaine was not earnest to march.

But Moltke's plan of campaign was based, beyond all other considerations, on the resolution at once to assail the enemy wherever found, and to keep the German

forces so compact that the attack could always be made with the advantage of superior strength. Although the Germans had overwhelmingly superior numbers in the field, this latter aspiration was not uniformly fulfilled. Indeed, there is a certain pride in Moltke's assertion that the Germans fought—and won—four important battles with the numerical odds against them, Spicheren, Courcelles, Vionville-Mars-la-Tour, and Noisseville, not to mention his claim of equal strength on the French side at Gravelotte. The failure always to make good the wise postulate of his plan in regard to concentration, resulted inevitably from the free hand accorded to subordinate commanders to bring on an unexpected battle at their discretion or indiscretion. It is true that because of various more or less fortuitous circumstances, no actual defeat resulted from this licence; but the risks it involved were certainly in two instances disproportionate to the possible attainable advantages. Is it credible that, had not Frossard at Spicheren been trammelled by Imperial restrictions, his three divisions would not have smashed Kameke's two brigades as they clung to his skirts for hours before reinforcements arrived? The German "Staff History" owns to the imminence of disaster at Courcelles; and but that the French were there tied to the defence, it is inconceivable that five French divisions should not have defeated five German brigades. What soldier who has realised the practical value of numbers in battle, will deny that had Bazaine with 150,000 regulars at his back, been

in dead earnest to force through at Mars-la-Tour, he could have swept Alvensleben's 40,000 Prussians out of his path before support could have reached the latter? Moltke writes of Noisseville, that there 36,000 Prussians repulsed 137,000 Frenchmen. With such odds in their favour as four to one, the Servian militia, fighting in earnest, would crush the best troops in Europe. The French did not break out simply because Bazaine fought merely to save appearances. With superior forces and copious reserves the brusque and butcherly offensive is a tempting game; but its attractions wane when, as with the Germans at Gravelotte, it entails the slaughter of 20,000 men in inflicting on the enemy a loss of 8,000.

It remains that the Germans were the conquerors; and that they conquered in virtue chiefly of Moltke's strategical skill and infusion of energy into all ranks of the German army. It is a true saying that nothing succeeds like success, and its converse is not less true—that nothing fails like failure. But the spectator of the Franco-German War must have been purblind or warped who could dare to aver that the old spirit was dead in the army on which had once shone the sun of Austerlitz —that army which had stormed the Mamelon with a rush. No; the poor mis-commanded, bewildered, harassed, overmatched, outnumbered soldiers in the blue képis and red breeches, fought on with a loyal valour which ever commanded respect and admiration. The sad, noble story of unavailing devotion is to be told of the

French regular army from the first battle to the ending at Sédan. With swelling heart and wet eyes I looked down on the final scene of that awful tragedy. The picture rises now before me of that terrible afternoon. The stern ring of German fire, ever encircling with stronger grip that plateau on which were huddled the Frenchmen as in the shambles; the storm of shell fire that tore lanes through the dense masses, bare to its pitiless blasts; the vehement yet impotent protests against the inevitable, in the shape of furious sorties. Now a headlong charge of Margueritte's cuirassiers thundering in glittering steel-clad splendour down the slope of Illy with an impetus that seemed resistless, till the fire of the German infantrymen smote the squadrons fair in the face, and heaped the sward with dead and dying. Now the frantic gallop to their fate of a regiment of light horsemen on their grey Arab stallions, up to the very muzzles of the needle-guns which the German linesmen held with steadiness so unwavering. Now a passionate outburst of red-trousered foot-soldiers, darting against a chance gap in the tightening environment, too surely to be crushed by the ruthless flanking fire. No semblance of order there, no token of leadership; simply a hell in the heart of which writhed an indiscriminate mass of brave men, with no thought in them but of fighting it out to the bitter end! I shudder as I write, at the recollection of the horrors of that ghastly field on the day after the battle. The ground was still slippery with blood, and in the hollows lay

little puddles which made one faint. Napoleon's one wise act was his displaying the white flag on the afternoon of Sedan. But, in their passion to keep on fighting, with what fury the soldiers execrated him and his conduct!

III.

THE DARK DAYS OF SEDAN.

The discrepancies about Sedan.—MacMahon wounded.—Napoleon in the Field.—Ducrot in Command.—Wimpfen supersedes him. —Napoleon and Ducrot in the Sous-Préfecture.—Wimpfen's contumacy.—The Final Bombardment and the White Flag.—Bronsart's return from Sedan.—Arrival of Reillé on the King's Hill.—Letters of Napoleon and the Prussian King.—The Hymn of Victory: "Nun danket alle Gott."—Bismarck's supper in Donchery.—The Midnight Conference.—Napoleon's exit from Sedan.—The Weaver's Cottage.—The interview in the Château Bellevue after Capitulation.—The French prisoner-Army on the Peninsula of Iges.—The last of the Weaver's Cottage.—End of Madame Fournaise.

ONE day, no doubt, the inevitable historian will undertake the task of writing a detailed account of the strange events which occurred about Sedan during the first week of September, 1870; but if in the endeavour he escapes falling a victim to softening of the brain, he may be accounted an exceptionally fortunate man. With certain salient facts, it is true, no difficulties will present themselves. It is unquestionable that a great battle was fought on the 1st, resulting in the defeat and surrender of the French army; that Marshal MacMahon, the French commander-in-chief, was struck down wounded in the early morning of that day; that on the same afternoon

the white flag was hoisted by order of the Emperor Napoleon, who sent out to the German monarch a letter tendering the surrender of his sword; that Napoleon on the early morning of the 2nd came out from Sedan, and met and conferred with Bismarck at the weaver's cottage on the Donchery road; that, subsequently, the capitulation of the French army having been consummated, he had an interview with King Wilhelm in the Château Bellevue; that on the following morning he started on his journey to Cassel as a prisoner-of-war; and that the French army of Sedan, more than 100,000 strong, was sent away into captivity in the German fortresses. Thus far, the historian's task will be simple enough; it is the hopeless and bewildering discrepancies in regard to details which will cause him to tear his hair, and bewail himself of his folly in choosing the avocation of a writer of history, instead of that of a frightener of crows. In those exciting Sedan days many people seem to have lost their heads, and more the faculty of memory. The hours at which events occurred were either unnoted or so noted as to be strangely discordant. Even the customary precision of the German "Staff History" is for once in default; and if it is vague, the vagueness of French generals and of irresponsible persons at large may be imagined.

Marshal MacMahon was in the field by five a.m. When riding along the high ground above La Moncelle he was severely wounded in the thigh by the fragment of a shell, and he then nominated Ducrot as his suc-

cessor in the chief command. It is impossible to fix the precise time at which the marshal was wounded, or when Ducrot first learnt of his promotion; but certainly before eight o'clock the latter was exercising command and ordering a retreat on Mézières, which, if it had been promptly carried out, might have temporarily saved at least a portion of the French army. But presently Wimpfen produced his commission from Palikao; and Ducrot, although for the moment indignant at his supersession, was probably not sorry to be relieved from a situation so complicated. Wimpfen countermanded the retreat on Mézières in favour of a hopeless attempt to break out towards the east in the direction of Carignan; and thenceforth there remained no hope for the French. The Emperor when riding out in the direction of the hardest fighting, had met the wounded marshal being brought in; one account says in the town, another on the road beyond the gate. No reference was thought worth while to be made to Napoleon as to the command—whether Ducrot or Wimpfen was to exercise it; the unfortunate Emperor mooned about the field for hours under fire, but had no influence whatsoever on the conduct of the battle; and he sent no reply to a letter from Wimpfen begging his Imperial master "to place himself in the midst of his troops who could be relied on to force a passage through the German lines." When the Emperor returned into Sedan is not to be ascertained; nor, except inferentially, at what hour he first directed the white flag to be ex-

hibited. No person has avowed himself the executant of that order, but the flag did not long fly; it was indignantly cut down by General Faure, MacMahon's chief-of-staff, who did not give himself the trouble to communicate with Napolean either before or after having taken this considerable liberty. By one o'clock, the battle in effect was lost and won; what followed was merely futile fighting and futile slaughter.

How anxious the Emperor continued to be for capitulation; how obstinate was Wimpfen that there should be no negotiations and no capitulation, is shown, rather confusedly it is true, by the testimony of Lebrun and Ducrot. "Why does this useless struggle still go on?" Napoleon demanded of Lebrun, who, a little before three p.m., entered his apartment in the sous-préfecture—"an hour ago and more I bade the white flag be displayed in order to sue for an armistice." Lebrun explained that certain additional formalities were requisite—a letter must be signed by the commander-in-chief and sent out by an officer with a trumpeter and a flag of truce. That document Lebrun prepared, and having procured officer, trumpeter, and flag of truce, he went forth to where Wimpfen was gathering troops for an attack on the Germans in Balan. As Lebrun approached him, the angry Wimpfen shouted, "No capitulation! Drop that rag! I mean to fight on!" and forthwith set out towards Balan, carrying Lebrun along with him into the fight.

Ducrot had been fighting hard to the northward of

Sedan, about Illy and the edge of the Bois de Garenne; straining every nerve to arrest, or at least to retard the environing advance of the Germans. Recognising that his efforts afforded no likelihood of success, he resolved soon after three o'clock to pass southward through Sedan, and join in an attempt to cut a way out towards Carignan and Montmédy. Ducrot had no hope of success in such an enterprise, but, nevertheless, was prepared to obey the order. But, as he has written, he was alone; he had not even a corporal's escort. He sent word to Wimpfen by that commander's orderly, that he would enter Sedan and attempt to gather some troops in support of Wimpfen's effort. What Ducrot saw inside Sedan may be told nearly in his own words.

The state of the interior of Sedan he has characterised as indescribable. The streets, the open places, the gates, were blocked up by waggons, guns, and the *impedimenta* and *débris* of a routed army. Bands of soldiers without arms, without packs, were rushing about throwing themselves into the churches, or breaking into private houses. Many unfortunate men were trampled under foot. The few soldiers who still preserved a remnant of energy seemed to be expending it in accusations and curses. "We have been betrayed!" they cried —"we have been sold by traitors and cowards!" There was really nothing to be done with such men, and Ducrot repaired to the Emperor in the sous-préfecture.

Napoleon no longer preserved that cold and im-

penetrable countenance familiar to all the world. The absolute silence which reigned in the presence of the sovereign rendered the noise outside more awfully tumultuous. The air was on fire. Shells fell on roofs, and struck masses of masonry which crashed down upon the pavements. "I do not understand," said the bewildered Emperor—"why the enemy continues his fire. I have ordered the white flag to be hoisted. I hope to obtain an interview with the king of Prussia, and may succeed in obtaining advantageous terms for the army." While the Emperor and Ducrot were conversing, the cannonade increased in violence from minute to minute. Conflagrations burst out. Women, children and wounded were destroyed. The sous-préfecture was struck; shells exploded every minute in garden and courtyard.

"It is absolutely necessary to stop the firing!" exclaimed the Emperor. "Here, write this!" he commanded General Ducrot:—"'The flag of truce having been displayed, negotiations are about to be opened with the enemy. The firing must cease all along the line.'" Then said the Emperor "Now sign it!" "Oh, no, sire," replied Ducrot, "I cannot sign: by what right could I sign? General Wimpfen is general-in-chief." "Yes," replied the Emperor, "but I don't know where General Wimpfen is to be found. Some one must sign!" "Let his chief-of-staff sign," suggested Ducrot, "or General Douay." "Yes," replied the Emperor, "let the chief-of-staff sign the order!"

The subsequent history of this order cannot be distinctly traced, nor whether, indeed, it ever got signed at all. It may have been enclosed in the missive from the Emperor which presently reached Wimpfen, and which that recalcitrant chief would not even open. It appeared that Wimpfen's troops had been gradually falling away from him; and he had ridden back to one of the gates of Sedan, on the double errand of procuring reinforcements and of trying to prevail on the Emperor to join him in his forlorn-hope attempt to break out. What then occurred may best be told in Wimpfen's own words:—

"Shortly before four o'clock," he wrote, "I reached the gate of Sedan. There, at last, there came to me M. Pierron of the Imperial Staff, who, instead of announcing the arrival of the sovereign which I was expecting with feverish impatience, handed me a letter from his Majesty, and he also informed me that the white flag was floating from the citadel of Sedan, and that I was charged with the duty of negotiating with the enemy... Not recognising the Emperor's right to order the hoisting of the flag, I replied to his messenger:— 'I will not take cognisance of this letter: I refuse to negotiate!' In vain did M. Pierron insist. I took his Majesty's letter, and holding it in my hand without opening it I entered the town, calling on the soldiers to follow me into the fight... Having gathered about 2,000 men, at the head of this gallant handful I succeeded, about five o'clock, in penetrating as far as the

church of Balan; but the reinforcements I hoped for did not arrive, and I then gave the order to retire on Sedan."

Wimpfen on his return to the fortress, forwarded his resignation to the Emperor, who then in vain attempted to persuade first Ducrot and then Douay to assume the command. Wimpfen finally was sent for, and in the presence of the Emperor a violent altercation occurred between him and Ducrot, in the course of which, it was believed, blows were actually exchanged. Ducrot, who was the more excited of the two, withdrew; and in the words of the Emperor, "General Wimpfen was brought to understand that, having commanded during the battle, his duty obliged him not to desert his post in circumstances so critical." Wimpfen would have been quite within his rights in persisting in resigning. The situation had been purely a military one, and he was commander-in-chief; yet the Emperor, who had no military position whatsoever, had overridden Wimpfen's powers while as yet that officer was in supreme command. Wimpfen showed patriotism and moral courage in taking on himself the invidious burden of conducting negotiations resulting from acts to which he had not been a party.

The scene may now be changed to the hill-top south of Frénois, from which the Prussian King and his *entourage* had been watching the course of events ever since the early morning. It would seem that the first white flag which Faure in his anger cut down, had not

been noticed in the German army. As the afternoon drew on the French defeat was decisively apparent; yet, although the fierceness of the fighting waned, the now surrounded army remained heroically stubborn in its resistance to inevitable fate; and so its final death-throe had to be artistically quickened up. In the stern words of the German "Official History," "a powerful artillery fire directed against the enemy's last point of refuge appeared the most suitable method of convincing him of the hopelessness of his situation, and of inducing him to surrender. With intent to hasten the capitulation, and thus spare the German army further sacrifices, the King ordered the whole available artillery to concentrate its fire on Sedan." This command, so states the "Staff History," was issued at four p.m., and was promptly acted on. The consequent exacerbation of the cannonade was, no doubt, that of which Ducrot tells, whilst he was in conversation with the Emperor in the sous-préfecture. Results of the reinforced and concentrated shell fire were soon manifested. Sedan seemed in flames. The French return-fire, gallantly maintained for a short time, was by-and-by crushed into silence. The "Staff History" yields no more time-data; to me the hurricane of shell fire seemed to endure for quite half an hour. Under its cover a Bavarian force was preparing to storm the Torcy Gate. At this moment the white flag was definitively displayed on the citadel flagstaff, and the German fire at once ceased. At the solicitation of the French commandant of the suburb of Torcy, the Ba-

varian leader then refrained from assault and remained in position outside the gate. As the news of impending negotiations spread, hostility ceased everywhere save about Balan, where the contumacious Wimpfen was still battling impotently. Tidings of the situation at Torcy having reached him, and the white flag being visible, the King of Prussia directed Colonel Bronsart von Schellendorf of his staff to ride into Sedan under a flag of truce, and summon the French Commander-in-Chief to surrender his army and the fortress. The Prussian officer penetrated into the city and duly announced the nature of his mission; but to his surprise he was ushered into the presence of the Emperor Napoleon, of whose presence in Sedan the German head-quarters had been ignorant. In reply to Bronsart's application for a French officer of rank to be appointed to negotiate, the Emperor simply informed him that the French army was under the command of General Wimpfen. This answer he desired Bronsart to take back to the king; and to intimate further that he would shortly send out his aide-de-camp, General Count Reillé, with a letter from himself to his Majesty.

Personally I witnessed nothing of what was passing on the summit of the Frénois hill, being with the Prussian skirmishers on the plateau of Floing when the roar of the cannon fell suddenly still. But on the same evening a distinguished officer of the headquarter staff, who had been a witness of everything that occurred on the Frénois summit, dictated to me the following account:—

"Bronsart and his companion Winterfeldt came trotting up the hill, the time being a quarter past six. Bronsart spurred his horse into a gallop as he came near, and, flinging his arm behind him in the direction of Sedan, exclaimed in a loud voice: "Der Kaiser ist da!" There was a loud outburst of cheering. But as Bronsart dismounted, Moltke, with a very serious face, strode towards him, and said something which gave Bronsart obvious chagrin—a rebuke, as I suppose, for his informality and lack of self-restraint in the immediate presence of the King. It was at a quarter to seven when, with a trooper in advance bearing on his lance the flag of truce and with an escort of Prussian cuirassiers, the French officer came up the hill at a walking pace. He halted and dismounted some horse-lengths short of where the King stood, out to the front of his retinue; then he advanced, doffing his képi as he came, and with a silent reverence handed to his Majesty the Emperor's letter. While the King, Bismarck, and Moltke conversed earnestly apart, the Crown Prince, with that gracious tact which is one of the finest traits of his character, entered into conversation with poor forlorn Reillé, standing out there among the stubbles. Presently Bismarck beckoned up from rearward a gentleman in civilian uniform, Count Hatzfeldt, I believe, of the Foreign Office, who withdrew after a short interview with the Chancellor, after having, I presume, received instructions for drafting the King's answer to the letter of the French Emperor. Presently there was a curious spectacle. The

King, sitting on a chair, was using as his writing-desk the seat of another chair, which was being held in position by Major von Alten. The King, as we all knew later, was inditing his reply to Napoleon from Count Hatzfeldt's draft.* After expressing sympathy and intimating his acceptance of the Emperor's sword, his Majesty desired that Napoleon should appoint an officer to conduct negotiations with General Moltke, whom he himself had delegated. Reillé rode back into Sedan with the King's reply. Soon after seven his Majesty and suite started on the drive back to Vendresse. Bismarck and Moltke rode into Donchery to take part in the conference for settling the terms of capitulation, and the Frénois hill was deserted."

The diary of Dr. Busch, Bismarck's secretary, who was with the headquarter staff, accords in essentials with the foregoing. Dr. Busch relates further that at a

* The following is the Emperor Napoleon's letter:—

"SIRE, MY BROTHER,—Not having been able to die in the midst of my troops, there is nothing left me but to render my sword into the hands of Your Majesty.

"I am, Your Majesty's good brother,

"NAPOLEON."

William's reply runs thus:—

"MY BROTHER,—While regretting the circumstances in which we meet, I accept Your Majesty's sword, and request that you will appoint one of your officers, and furnish him with the necessary powers to treat for the capitulation of the army which has fought so valiantly under your command. I, for my part, have appointed General von Moltke to this duty.

"Your loving brother,

"WILHELM."

quarter past five a Bavarian officer came to the King with information that his general (Maillenger) was in Torcy, that the French desired to capitulate, and were ready to surrender unconditionally; and that this messenger took back orders that all proposals as to negotiations were to be sent direct to the royal headquarters. A little later an officer who had ridden out to ascertain something as to the German casualties, returned with the information that those were moderate.

"And the Emperor?" asked the King of him.

"Nobody knows!" announced the officer.

Thus far, if the hour-data are not very specific, there are no important discrepancies in the testimony of eye-witnesses. But they are conspicuous in the evidence of the two witnesses now to be cited. The late General Sheridan of the United States army, a man of keen observation and unimpeachable veracity, trained by much experience to coolness in the midst of battle, was officially attached to the royal headquarters. He made notes on the spot which he told me he had implicitly followed when writing his memoirs, published immediately after his premature and lamented death in 1888. And the following in his testimony:—

"About three o'clock, the French being in a desperate and hopeless situation, the King ordered the firing to be stopped, and at once despatched one of his staff, Colonel von Bronsart, with the demand for a surrender. Just as this officer was starting I remarked to Bismarck that Napoleon himself would likely be one

of the prizes; but the Count, incredulous, replied, "Oh, no; the old fox is too cunning to be caught in such a trap. He has doubtless slipped off to Paris." Between four and five o'clock Bronsart returned from his mission to Sedan, bringing word to the King that General Wimpfen, the commanding officer there, wished to know, in order that the further effusion of blood might be spared, upon what terms he might surrender. The colonel also brought the intelligence that the French Emperor was in the town."

The late Mr. Holt White, the correspondent of the *New York Tribune* and *Pall Mall Gazette*, was with Sheridan throughout the day. He wrote: —

"About five o'clock there was a suspension of fighting all along the line. Five minutes later we saw a French officer, escorted by two Uhlans, coming at a hard trot up the steep bridle-path, one of the Uhlans carrying a white duster on a faggot stick as a flag of truce. This officer, who came to ask for terms of surrender, was told that in a matter of such importance it was necessary to send an officer of high rank. About half-past six there was a sudden cry among members of the King's staff, "Der Kaiser ist da!" and ten minutes later General Reillé rode up with a letter from Napoleon to his Majesty, who wrote a reply begging Napoleon to come out next morning to the royal headquarters at Vendresse.

Of course this is an error; but what of the French officer of whose mission Holt White reported? The

Bavarian officer from Torcy to whom Busch refers might have been mistaken for a Frenchman, when as yet people were not very well up in uniforms, were it not for the flag of truce. The "white duster" was certainly no myth, for Holt White brought it to London, where many people saw it; and Sheridan told me he saw it given to White. Could this officer have brought out the paper drawn out by Lebrun, at which Faure would not look, but which some one other than the commander-in-chief might have signed, and which had got forwarded somehow? But if this were so, how comes it that no mention was ever made by French writers of its exodus, or by the German "Official History" of its reception?

As it fell dusk a strange uncanny silence and stillness succeeded to the thunderous noise and turmoil of the day. The smoke of the long cannonade still hung low on the uplands of Floing and Illy, and around the sombre fortifications of Sedan. The whole horizon was lurid with the reflection of fires. All along the valley of the Meuse were the bivouacs of the German hosts. A hundred and fifty thousand Teuton soldiers lay in a wide circle around their beaten and shattered foe. On hill and in valley glowed in the darkness the flames of burning villages, the glare here and there reflecting itself on the face of the placid Meuse. What were the Germans doing on this their night of consummated triumph? Celebrating their victory in wassail and riot? No. There rose from every bivouac one unanimous

chorus of song, but not the song of insolence or of ribaldry. The chaunt that filled with solemn harmony the wide valley was Luther's hymn, the glorious

"Nun danket alle Gott!"

the Old Hundredth of the German race. To listen to this vast martial choir singing this noble hymn on the field of hard-won victory was to understand, in some measure, under what inspiration that victory had been gained.

Late that same evening there was a great concourse of German officers in the little hotel in the Square of Donchery. The house had hours earlier been eaten out of everything except bread; but there was plenty of wine and champagne flowed freely. My companion and myself achieved great popularity by the free distribution of a quantity of sardines which were among the provisions stored in the well of our carriage. About eleven o'clock Bismarck, uniformed and booted to the thigh, strode into the *salle-à-manger,* hungry, and demanding supper. He made a formal statement to the assembled officers to the effect that the French Emperor had sent out to the King the surrender of his sword; and he read in a loud voice a copy of Napoleon's letter. Adding no comments, he led off a hearty cheer, and then gave the toasts of "the King" and the "Fatherland." But his supper tarried. An officer ventured into the kitchen with intent to ascertain what was being prepared for the Chancellor. Alas, the unhappy hostess protested, with many *mon Dieus!* that the Germans

might eat her if they chose and welcome, but that the only food in the place was half-a-dozen dubious eggs. From a ham among our stores we contributed sundry slices, and they, with the dubious eggs, were prepared for the Chancellor's supper. But even so great a man as he was not exempt from the practical realisation of the adage that there is many a slip between the cup and the lip. Between kitchen and dining-room the dish was cut out and carried off by a privateering Uhlan officer; and it was not until after perquisition throughout the depleted little town that a beefsteak was found, on which Bismarck at last supped, washing it down with a bottle of Donchery champagne.

Thus fortified, the Chancellor about midnight joined Moltke, whom the King had designated to name terms for the capitulation of the French army. That was a strange conference which was held in the still watches of the night in the salon of a house just outside of Donchery. The greetings were curt. Wimpfen verified his powers, and presented to Moltke Generals Faure and Castelnau as his colleagues. Moltke, with a brusque wave of the hand, introduced Count Bismarck and General Blumenthal, and then seats were taken. On one side of the great central table sat the three Germans, Moltke in the centre with Bismarck on his right and Blumenthal on his left. On the opposite side of the table sat Wimpfen by himself; behind him, somewhat in shadow, Faure, Castelnau, and a few other French officers. A Prussian captain stood by the

mantelpiece, ready to commit to paper the proceedings in shorthand; on the French side a vivid précis was taken by Captain of Cuirassiers d'Orcet. Moltke sat silent and impassive; and after an embarrassing pause, Wimpfen had at length to take the initiative by inquiring what were the conditions the Prussian King was prepared to accord.

"They are very simple," replied Moltke curtly. "The whole French army to surrender with arms and belongings: the officers to be permitted to retain their arms, but to be prisoners of war along with their men."

Wimpfen scouted those terms, and demanded for the French army that it should be allowed to withdraw with arms, equipment, and colours, on condition of not serving while the war should last. Moltke adhered inexorably to the conditions which he had specified, and was adamant to the pleading of the French general. Losing temper, the latter exclaimed—

"I cannot accept the terms you impose. I will appeal to the honour and heroism of my army, and will cut my way out or stand on my defence at Sedan!"

Moltke's reply was crushing.

"A sortie and the defensive," he grimly remarked, "are equally impossible. The mass of your infantry are demoralised; we took to-day more than 20,000 unwounded prisoners, and your whole force is not now more than 80,000 strong. You cannot pierce our lines,

for I have surrounding you 240,000 men with 500 guns in position to fire on Sedan and your camps around the place. You cannot maintain your defensive there, because you have not provisions for forty-eight hours and your ammunition is exhausted. If you desire, I will send one of your officers round our positions, who will satisfy you as to the accuracy of my statements."

At this point Bismarck and Wimpfen, somewhat to Moltke's discontent, entered into a political discussion, in the course of which the Chancellor spoke his mind very freely but in which Moltke took no share. Assured that there could be no mitigation of the terms, Wimpfen exclaimed—

"Then it is equally impossible for me to sign such a capitulation: we will renew the battle!"

Moltke's quiet, curt answer was—

"The armistice expires at 4 a.m. At that hour, to the moment, I shall reopen fire."

There was nothing more to be said. The Frenchmen called for their horses: meanwhile, not a word was spoken; in the language of the reporter, "Le silence était glacial." It was at length broken by Bismarck, who urged Wimpfen not to allow a moment of pique to break off the conference. Wimpfen represented that he alone could not undertake the responsibility of a decision, that it was necessary that he should consult his colleagues; that the final answer could not be forthcoming by 4 a.m., and that the prolongation of the

armistice was indispensable. After a short colloquy between Bismarck and Moltke, the latter, with well-feigned reluctance, gave his consent that the truce should be extended until nine o'clock; whereupon Wimpfen quitted Donchery and rode back into Sedan. He went straight to the bedside of the Emperor, who, having been informed of the harshness of the German conditions, said—

"I shall start at five o'clock for the German head-quarters, and shall entreat the King to grant more favourable conditions."

It was then about half-past three a.m.

Napoleon did his best to act up to his resolution. He was in his carriage at the hour he had named. Expecting that he would be permitted to return to Sedan, notwithstanding that he had formally constituted himself a prisoner of war, he bade no farewells. As he passed through the Torcy Gate a little before six o'clock, the Zouaves on duty there shouted "Vive l'Empereur!"—"the last adieu which fell upon his ears" from the voices of French soldiers. It was strange that the first greeting he received as he passed over the drawbridge, was a silent and respectful salutation from American officers. General Sheridan and his aide-de-camp Colonel Forsyth were conversing with the German subaltern on duty on the picket-line, when there came out an open carriage containing four officers, one of whom, in the uniform of a general and smoking a cigarette, the American officers recognised as the Em-

peror Napoleon. They followed the carriage, which proceeded towards Donchery at a leisurely pace. At the hamlet of Frénois, about a mile from Donchery, it halted for some time, Napoleon remaining seated in the vehicle, still smoking, and enduring with nonchalance the stare of a group of German soldiers near by, who were gazing on the fallen monarch with curious and eager interest.

Looking out from my bedroom window into the little *Place* of Donchery at a quarter to six the same morning, I observed a French officer, whom I afterwards knew to be General Reillé, sitting on horseback in front of the house which I knew to be Bismarck's quarters for the night. Reillé presently rode slowly away. He was scarcely out of sight, when Bismarck, in flat cap and undress uniform, his long cuirassier boots stained and dusty, as if he had slept in them, came outside, swung himself on to his big bay horse and rode away in Reillé's track. I was close by him as he forced his masterful way through the chaos that all but blocked the Donchery street. There was no redness about the deep-set eyes or weariness in the strong-lined face; it had been midnight when he drank his last glass of champagne in the Hôtel de Commerce, and he and Moltke had been wrestling with Wimpfen about the terms of capitulation for some three hours longer: yet here he was before the clock had chimed the hour of six, fresh, hearty, steady of hand and clear of throat, as the ringing voice proved in which he bade

the throng of soldiery give him space to pass. I followed him on foot at a little distance as he crossed the bridge and rode at a walking pace towards Sedan, but fell behind when he started off at a smart canter. I was not up in time for the actual meeting between the Emperor and Bismarck; Sheridan told me that the latter came up at a canter, dismounted, letting his horse go, and drawing near on foot, uncovered his head and bowed low. The man to whom he spoke—the man with the leaden-coloured face, the lines of which were drawn and deepened as if by some spasm, the gaunt-eyed man with the dishevelled moustache and the weary stoop of the shoulders, was none other than Napoleon the Third and last.

As I came up, Bismarck had remounted, and was following along the road towards Donchery a rather shabby open carriage, on the right of the principal seat of which I at once recognised the Emperor. He wore a blue cloak with scarlet lining, which was thrown back disclosing the decorations on his breast. There were three officers in the vehicle with the Emperor, and three more rode abreast of Bismarck behind the carriage. A few hundred yards had been traversed by the cortège in the direction of Donchery, when at Napoleon's instance the carriage was halted in front of a weaver's cottage on the left-hand side of the road. I saw him turn round in his seat and heard the request he made to Bismarck, that he should be allowed to wait in the cottage until he should have an interview

with the King. Bismarck placed at his disposal his own quarters in Donchery; but the Emperor, who appeared to be suffering, reiterated his desire to wait in the roadside cottage. The cottage, two storeys high, its front painted a dusky yellow, is the nearest to Sedan of a block of three, standing some fifteen feet south of the highway and on a slightly higher elevation.

Up to this point on the morning of September 2nd, there is approximate accord among the authorities: but beyond it the discrepancies are considerable. Sheridan's account has the precedence, as he was earliest on the ground. His testimony was that the Emperor and Bismarck on alighting entered the cottage together, and that, reappearing in a quarter of an hour, they seated themselves in front of the cottage on chairs brought out by the weaver. There, for fully an hour, they were engaged in an animated conversation, if much gesticulation on the part of Bismarck was to be taken as an indication. At length, soon after eight o'clock, Bismarck arose, saluted the Emperor, and strode towards his horse. On the way he asked Sheridan if he had noticed how, when they first met, Napoleon had started; and Sheridan replying in the affirmative, Bismarck said—

"Well, it must have been due to my manner, not my words, for those were—'I salute your Majesty just as I would my own king.'"

Then, advising Sheridan to go to the adjacent Château Bellevue, as the next scene of interest, Bismarck

himself, stated Sheridan, rode off towards Vendresse to communicate with his sovereign. On this point Sheridan was certainly in error: Bismarck merely went to his Donchery quarters to breakfast and get into full uniform.

Bismarck's account of the morning's occurrences was given by him to Busch a few days later; it is condensed as follows: —

He, Bismarck, met the Emperor near Frénois. Napoleon desired to speak with the King of Prussia, which Bismarck said was impossible, as the King was nine miles away. The Emperor then asked where meantime he could stay, and accepted Bismarck's offer of the latter's Donchery quarters. But he stopped the carriage opposite the weaver's cottage, and expressed his desire to remain there. Bismarck accompanied him to a small room on the upper floor of the cottage, a room with a single window, its sole furniture a deal table and two rush-bottomed chairs. The conversation lasted here for about three-quarters of an hour; at the end of which Bismarck rode away to dress, and, on his return in full uniform, conducted Napoleon to the Château Bellevue with a "guard of honour" of cuirassiers. There Bismarck presently had himself called out of the room to evade further conversation with the Emperor, who was told that he could not see the King until the capitulation was settled. Soon Moltke and Wimpfen came to terms, and then the sovereigns met. "When the Emperor came out from the interview, his eyes were full of

tears." In his official report Bismarck specially stated that his long interview with the Emperor, "which lasted nearly an hour," was held inside the weaver's cottage.

The following are the recollections of Madame Fournaise, the weaver's wife, a Frenchwoman, given soon after the close of the war, when, she maintained, the events were still fresh in her memory:—

The Emperor, said Madame Fournaise, disliking to pass through the crowds of German soldiers on the Donchery road, alighted and came up her narrow staircase. To reach the inner room he had to pass through her bedroom, where she had just risen. The furniture of the inner room consisted of two straw-bottomed chairs, a round table, and a press. Bismarck, "in a rough dress," presently joined the Emperor, and for a quarter of an hour, said Madame Fournaise, they talked in low tones, of which she, remaining in the outer room, caught occasionally a word. Then Bismarck rose and came clattering out. "Il avait une très mauvaise mine." She warned him of the break-neck stairs, but he "sprang down them like a man of twenty," mounted his horse and rode away towards Donchery. When she entered the room in which the Emperor was left, she found him seated at the little table with his face buried in his hands. "Can I do anything for your Majesty?" she asked. "Only to pull down the blinds," was Napoleon's reply, without lifting his head. He would not speak to General Lebrun, who came to him. In about

half an hour Bismarck returned in full uniform; he preceded the Emperor down the stairs, facing towards him as to "usher him with a certain honour." On the threshold the Emperor gave her four twenty-franc gold pieces—he "put them into my own hand"; and he said plaintively, "This perhaps is the last hospitality which I shall receive in France." Bismarck, added Madame Fournaise, was looking hard at her, and recognised her as having served his supper in the Donchery hotel on the previous night. With a kindly word of farewell "which I shall never forget," the Emperor quitted the poor house in which he had suffered so much unhappiness, and entered the carriage which was to convey him to the Château Bellevue. Madame Fournaise's heart was better than her memory.

The following is what I personally saw, condensed from copious notes taken at the moment with watch in hand. Immediately on alighting, at ten minutes past seven, Napoleon, who was obviously suffering, hurried round to the back of the house, while Bismarck and Reillé went inside but almost immediately came out. Soon the Emperor returned, and he and Bismarck then entered together, ascending to the upper floor. At twenty minutes past seven they came out, Bismarck a few moments in advance. Two chairs were brought out in front of the cottage by the weaver living on the ground floor; the two then sat down facing the road, the Emperor on the right; and the outdoor conversation began which lasted nearly an hour. Bismarck had

covered himself in compliance with a gesture and a bow from the Emperor. As they sat, the latter occasionally smiled faintly and made a remark; but plainly Bismarck was doing most of the talking, and that, too, energetically. From my position I could just hear the rough murmur of Bismarck's voice when he occasionally raised it; and then he would strengthen the emphasis by the gesture of bringing a finger of the left hand down on the palm of the right. The stubbly-bearded weaver living upstairs was all the while overlooking the pair from a front window. After they had parted, I asked this man what he had overheard. "Nothing," said he; "they spoke in German, of which I know but a few words. When the monsieur in the white cap first spoke to the Emperor, he addressed him in French; then the Emperor said, 'Let us talk in German.'"

Bismarck, happening to see my letter describing the events of the morning, instructed Busch to contradict certain of my statements. The assertion was persevered in that "he had spent three-quarters of an hour at least inside the cottage in the upstairs room; and was only a very short time outside with the Emperor." He had never struck finger into palm, which was not a trick of his; and he did not speak German with the Emperor, although he did so with the people of the house. In this connection may be quoted the following extract from Sir W. H. Russell's narrative of an account of the memorable morning given to him by Bismarck:—"He [Napoleon] alighted, and I proposed that we should go

into a little cottage close by. But the house. . . . was not clean, and so chairs were brought outside, and we sat together talking."

After Bismarck's departure the Emperor, who was then out-of-doors, spoke a few words with his officers, and then for a time sauntered moodily and solitary up and down the potato plot on the right of the cottage, his white-gloved hands clasped behind him, limping slightly as he walked, and smoking hard. Later he came and sat down among his officers, maintaining an almost entire silence while they spoke and gesticulated with great animation. Busch was among the spectators, and he has described the Emperor as "a little thick-set man, wearing jauntily a red cap with gold border, black paletot lined with red, red trousers, and white kid gloves. His whole appearance," to Dr. Busch's genial perception, "was a little unsoldierlike. The man looked too soft, too shabby, I may say, for the uniform he wore." At a quarter past nine there came from Donchery a detachment of Prussian cuirassiers, who briskly formed a cordon round the rear of the block of cottages. The stalwart lieutenant dismounted two troopers, and without a glance at the group of Frenchmen or a gesture of salute to the Emperor, marched them up to behind the Emperor's chair, halted them, uttered in a loud voice the command, "Draw swords!" and then gave the men their orders in an undertone. Napoleon started abruptly, glanced backwards with a gesture of surprise, and his face flushed—the first evi-

dence of emotion I had observed him to manifest. At a quarter to ten Bismarck returned, now in full uniform, his burnished helmet flashing in the sun-rays. Moltke accompanied him, but while Bismarck strode forward to where the Emperor was now standing, Moltke remained among the group gathered on the road. Half-way to Vendresse Moltke had met the King, who approved of the proposed terms of capitulation, and intimated that he could not see the Emperor until they had been accepted by the French commander-in-chief.

Wiping his hot face, Bismarck strode up to the Emperor, and spoke with him for a few moments. Then he ordered up the carriage, which Napoleon entered, and the cortège, escorted by the cuirassier "guard of honour," moved off at a walk towards the Château Bellevue, which lies nearer Sedan than does the weaver's cottage. The charming residence, bowered in a grove, overlooks a bend of the Meuse and the plain on which Sedan stands. The garden entrance was on the first floor, reached from without by a broad flight of steps. The Emperor occupied the principal salon in the central block, where he remained alone after Bismarck had left him, his officers remaining in the conservatories on either side. Napoleon seemed ill and broken as he slowly ascended the steps, with drooping head and dragging limbs.

It has been already stated that at the close of the nocturnal conference in Donchery, the armistice had been prolonged until nine a.m. The members of the council-

of-war which Wimpfen had summoned for seven a.m., listened to that unfortunate chief, as with a voice broken by sobs he repeated the conditions stubbornly insisted on by Moltke. Two officers voted for continued resistance, but ultimately the council was unanimously in favour of acceptance of the conditions. Nevertheless, during hour after hour, Wimpfen procrastinated. Before riding away to meet the King coming from Vendresse, Moltke had sent into Sedan an officer with the blunt ultimatum that hostilities would without fail be renewed at ten o'clock unless by that hour negotiations should have been resumed. Wimpfen still hesitating to act, Captain Zingler remarked cheerfully that his instructions, in case of an unsatisfactory answer, were to give orders as he rode back that the German batteries, numbering some 450 field-guns and commanding the French army as if in a ring-fence, should open fire promptly at the hour specified. Under stress of an argument so stern as that, Wimpfen accompanied the Prussian captain to the Château Bellevue, in the panelled dining-room in the ground floor of which, about eleven o'clock, the articles of capitulation were signed by Moltke and the French commander. Then Wimpfen had a moment upstairs with his Imperial master, whom he informed with great emotion that "all was finished!" "The Emperor," wrote Wimpfen, "with tears in his eyes approached me, pressed my hand, and embraced me. . . My sad and painful duty accomplished, I rode back to Sedan, 'la mort dans l'âme.'"

The Prussian monarch, with his son and their respective staffs, had been awaiting on the Frénois hill the tidings of the completion of the capitulation; and now the great cavalcade rode down into the grounds of the Château. As Wilhelm alighted, Napoleon came down the steps to meet him. What a greeting! The German, tall, upright, bluff, square-shouldered, with the flash of victory from the keen blue eyes under the helmet, and the glow of good fortune on the fresh old face; the Frenchman, bent with weary stoop of the shoulders, leaden-faced, his eye drooping, his lip quivering, bare-headed and dishevelled. As the two clasped hands silently, Napoleon's handkerchief was at his eyes, and the King's face was working with emotion. Then the "good brothers" mounted the steps and entered the château together. Their interview, which no man shared, lasted about twenty minutes; and then the Prussian King set off to ride through his victorious soldiers bivouacking on the battle-field. The Emperor remained in the Château Bellevue.

My companion and myself made haste to enter Sedan, now that the capitulation was completed. We got on to the glacis of the place without any difficulty, and found the soldiers lying on it to consist chiefly of Turcos and Zouaves, dirty fellows most of them, but certainly in better case to all appearance than the troops we subsequently saw inside Sedan. Everybody was friendly, and wine was pressed on us—the more warmly when it was discovered that we were Englishmen. One

especially greasy and strong smelling Turco of a full Day-and-Martin colour, strove vehemently to kiss us, but we fled. Getting into Sedan itself was a difficult matter. The gates were closed, and were opened only to admit the wounded as they were brought in on waggons. By the advice of a friendly Turco who set us the example, we jumped into one of the waggons and passed in without hindrance. As rapidly as possible for the tumultuous press, we traversed several streets of the town. We saw where Marshal MacMahon lay wounded. The town was swarming with disbanded soldiers, every foot of space densely packed. Of the wounded some were in the churches, the houses, and the public buildings; many lay unheeded and jostled in the gateways and courtyards; the dead were everywhere—in the gutters, trampled on by the living, on the swampy margin of the moat, littering the narrow ways between the glacis and the ramparts, lying, some of them, on the steps of the churches. The sight was one never to be exorcised from the memory—a sight of misery, disorganisation, and general devilry assuredly unique in this generation —an eddying welter of ferocious or despondent humanity, trampling recklessly over the dead and the wounded, the men now yelling for the blood of their officers, now struggling in fierce contention for a morsel of bread.

The day was not yet far spent, and we betook ourselves to the section of the battle-field on the plateau of Floing. The tract charged over by the Chasseurs d'Afrique was a scene of terrible carnage. The Arab

stallions ridden by those troopers had died very hard; in many cases they had made graves with their struggles for their riders and themselves before they died. Higher up on the tableland there was fearful evidence of the power of shell-fire at short range. I counted half a dozen headless corpses within a space of two hundred yards—their heads had been blown away almost as clean as if they had been guillotined. Men disembowelled, trunks shattered into gory fragments, legs or arms blown away, were common but ghastly spectacles that turned one sick.

Late the same afternoon I saw the Emperor again. He had come out into the park of the Château to superintend the reorganisation of his train, which had quitted Sedan in the course of the day. He looked very wan and weary, but still maintained the old impassive aspect. The Imperial equipage in its magnificence, the numerous glittering and massive fourgons, the splendid teams of draught animals and the squadron of led horses, presented an extraordinary contrast to the plain simplicity of the King of Prussia's campaigning outfit. In gold and scarlet the coachmen and outriders of Napoleon glittered profusely. He of Prussia had his postillions in plain blue cloth, with oilcloth covers on their hats to keep the dust off the nap. The Emperor and his suite left the Château Bellevue on the morning of the 3rd, driving through Donchery and by Illy across the frontier to Bouillon in Belgium, on the way to Wilhelmshöhe.

Zola, in his vivid but often grotesquely erroneous *Débâcle*, has fallen into strange blundering on the subject of the Imperial equipage. He thus refers to it:—

"The Imperial baggage train—cause in its day of so much scandal—had been left behind at Sedan, where it rested in ignominious hiding behind the Sous-Préfet's lilac bushes. It puzzled the authorities somewhat to devise means of ridding themselves of what was to them a *bête noire* by getting it away from the city unseen by the famishing multitude, upon whom the sight of its flaunting splendour would have produced the same effect that a red rag does on a maddened bull. They waited until there came an unusually dark night, when horses, carriages and baggage waggons, with their silver stew-pans, plate, linen, and baskets of fine wines, all trooped out of Sedan in deepest mystery, and shaped their course for Belgium, noiselessly, without beat of drum, over the least frequented roads, like a thief stealing away in the night!"

This is utter nonsense. As I have stated, I saw the Imperial train in the park of the Château Bellevue on the afternoon of the 2nd September, the day after the battle. Apart from this personal testimony, the story told by Zola is transparently absurd. By the evening of September 3rd the capitulated French Army was disarmed and enclosed under guard on the peninsula of Iges. There remained then in Sedan only its normal, or less than normal population, far too crushed to attempt any irregularity. A German Governor of Sedan had been

installed, German troops constituted the garrison of the place, and Sedan would not have dared to emit so much as a mild hiss if the Imperial train, assuming that it had remained in Sedan after Napoleon's departure, which it did not, had perambulated the city in face of the population all day long.

The Germans, having determined to utilise as a prison for the capitulated army the peninsula of Iges, surrounded by the Meuse on three sides, and on the fourth by the closely guarded line of the canal, had marched on to it during September 3rd the disarmed French troops to the number of at least 100,000. The Germans themselves were temporarily short of supplies, having outmarched their commissariat; and could spare little for their prisoners. But for the first day or two on the peninsula the captives fared better than the captors. Nobody can accomplish a savoury mess under difficulties like a Frenchman, or house himself when another man would have to put up with the heavens for his roof. Innumerable fires were blazing; on every fire there was a saucepan, and in the saucepan were potatoes and something else. Whence came the potatoes was plain enough—we could see the fellows digging them out with their bayonets; but about the "something else" all that one could tell was that it smelt nice. The men who were not cooking were rigging up their *tentes d'abris* and gathering bedding of boughs and leaves. They were the civillest, cheeriest, best-humoured set of fellows imaginable. We two, quite alone, and unable to contribute any-

thing to the general good—for our flasks and tobacco pouches were but drops in the bucket—experienced no word but of the frankest courtesy and the heartiest cordiality, alike on the part of officers and men. After a long gossip with a group of captains, we strolled down to the river and accepted the invitation of a bivouac of Zouaves to join them at supper. The mess was better than good; it was superb. It consisted of potatoes, the mysterious savoury "something," and flesh of some kind or other. The sunburnt Zouaves treated us like princes, but evaded a direct reply to our question what was the flesh-ingredient of their mess. After we had bidden good-night to the merry rascals, we came on the carcass of a horse which had been killed by a shell, and there was missing a considerable section of a flank.

It was late before we quitted the peninsula, and when we were once outside and realised the difficulty of finding quarters, we were sorry that we had not stayed with the Zouaves. Donchery we knew to have been invaded by a whole army corps; Frénois was seething full of Bavarians; the gates of Sedan were closed for the night. Our vehicle was waiting for us at the canal, but the driver could suggest no night quarters. As we were discussing the probabilities of a bivouac we drove past the front of the Château Bellevue. All was in darkness. A happy if audacious thought struck my companion. "Let us sleep here!" he cried with a veritable inspiration—"the place is empty." The gardener —now since the departure of the morning the sole in-

mate of the premises—seemed content enough to have for inmates a couple of quiet civilians, and he conducted us into the beautifully panelled dining-room, on the table in which the capitulation had been signed on the previous morning. Good quarters, it was true, we had, but no food; for the Imperial party had exhausted the resources of the establishment, and the gardener assured us that he himself was extremely hungry. At the great oak table, sullen and hungry, I sat writing a letter to my newspaper, while my companion disconsolately gnawed a ham-bone, the miserable remnant of our store of provisions. It had but scant picking on it, and my companion, with a muttered objurgation, threw it angrily on the table. As the bone fell it upset my ink-bottle and spilt its contents. Revisiting the Château after the war, I was gravely shown a great ink-stain on the table, which, the guide solemnly informed me, was caused by the upsetting of the ink-bottle used at the signature of the capitulation of Sedan. Wimpfen, I was assured, had overturned it in the agitation of his shame and grief. The guide added that great sums had been offered for this table with the "historic" ink-stain, but that no money would induce the proprietor to part with it. Thus do delusions gradually crystallise into items of traditional history. The stain on the floor of Mary Stuart's room in Holyrood, caused, we are assured, by Rizzio's blood, is probably the result of a saucerful of beetroot vinegar upset by the janitor's baby centuries after Mary met her cruel fate.

To me was assigned the bedroom which had been occupied on the previous night by the Emperor Napoleon. It was in the state in which he had left it. Sheets and a quilt were on the bed; but one of the window-hangings, with its semicircular canopy, had been dragged down and used as an additional covering. The glass doors of a book-case stood open; and on the night-table at the bed-head lay open, face downwards, a volume which had been taken from the case. The reader of the night before had made a selection in which there was something ominous—the book was Bulwer Lytton's historical novel, "The Last of the Barons."

On the tenth anniversary of the great battle I revisited Sedan. Alike in city and on battle-field, there was scarcely a trace of the memorable contest. The bones of the fallen had been exhumed from the scattered graves and gathered into ossuaries, of which the largest is the great crypt under the joint memorial of the French and German dead of the desperate fighting about Bazielles—a gruesome place with an alley down the centre, on one side of which had been stacked the skulls and bones of the fallen French, on the other those of the slain Germans. The only pilgrimage then still somewhat in vogue was to the weaver's cottage, which Madame Fournaise, now a widow, continued to inhabit. Her recollections were still fresh of probably the most momentous day of her life; and she narrated them with not a little spirit and feeling. Good-hearted soul as was Madame Fournaise, she was, all the same,

a woman of business, and had made the most of her opportunities. It was to Bismarck she sold—not at his own price—the table at which he had sat with the fallen Emperor. The purchasers of the two veritably original straw-bottomed chairs were the late Sir Beauchamp Walker, the English Military Commissioner with the German Crown Prince's army, and the late General Sheridan. For years, although by this time the pilgrims were not so plentiful, Madame Fournaise had done well for herself by showing the upper chamber in which the interview took place; and by selling, mostly, she said, to American travellers, relay after relay of straw-bottomed chairs which she frankly owned to have passed off as the originals.

"And what about the four twenty-franc pieces?" I asked. "No doubt you have sold them over and over again?"

"Oh, my God, no!" she exclaimed. "Never—never! Did he not give them to me with his own hand? See! the original four are in that locked case with the glass top on the mantel yonder. Yes, I have had great offers for them. Over and over again I could have had 500 francs for the four pieces; but no money would tempt me to sell them!"

Ten years later it happened that I once again was in Sedan. On my way back from looking at the pathetic and graceful monument overhanging the bend of the Meuse, which France had recently raised to the memory of her dead, I halted in front of the historic

cottage. I found it uninhabited and in dilapidation. The door was locked, and the key far away in the possession of the proprietor, a farmer of Carignan. There was no longer access to the upper room wherein sat Napoleon and Bismarck on that memorable morning of September 1870. In one of the adjacent cottages I found a crone who told me that Madame Fournaise had been dead for several years. She lies in the Donchery graveyard. Three of the twenty-franc pieces, it seemed, were coins of Louis XVIII. Of the four pieces she had cherished so long, she had directed that those three should be dedicated to the payment for her grave and to defray her funeral expenses; the fourth, a Napoleon, was to be buried with her—in the coffin of the poor woman who had given to the unfortunate Emperor Napoleon "the last hospitality which he received in France."

IV.

AMBUSH AGAINST AMBUSH.

"PLEASE you, Herr Major, Corporal Zimmermann has returned to the picket with Sly Patrol No. 2. He reports that in the gap of the hedge in front of the large field over against the park wall of the Schloss Launay, No. 1,420, soldier Claus Spreckels, of Captain Hammerstein's company, was killed by a shot fired from the little house by the gate. That makes the seventh man killed this week by the pig-dog who lurks there and never misses a chance!"

The speaker was Under-Officer Schulz, of the third battalion, infantry regiment No. 103, forming part of General von Montbe's division of the 12th (Royal Saxon) Army Corps, doing duty on the east side of Paris during the memorable siege in the winter of 1870—71.

Under-Officer Schulz would have made an excellent model for a painter anxious to limn a Cameronian or one of Cromwell's ironsides. Instead of Schulz, his name might have been Praise-the-Lord Barebones. Tall, gaunt, thin-flanked and square-shouldered, with high cheek-bones, lantern jaws, and narrow peaked forehead, Under-Officer Schulz, Saxon though he was, had nothing

of the genial informality so characteristic of his countrymen. He had entered the apartment, taken three measured steps from the door with accurately pointed toes, had halted smartly, bringing his heels together with an audible click; and then he stood motionless, stiff, and severely erect while he made the above report to Major von Schönberg, the commander of the battalion.

"Pig-dog, indeed!" said the major savagely. "He takes every chance, as you say, and never gives one! Have the dead Spreckels buried according to form. That will do, Under-Officer Schulz!"

"At your order, Herr Major!" answered the under-officer, with a salute; then he went right about in three motions as if he were a piece of mechanism, took three measured paces to the door, and disappeared.

The scene was a handsome but sorely dilapidated salon in a château on the outskirts of the village of Gagny, on the German fore-post line of the section of environment between Raincy and Ville Evrart right opposite to Mont Avron, over the lower summit of which showed grimly the sullen face and menacing embrasures of Fort Rosny. There were big guns then on Mont Avron, and yet bigger in Fort Rosny; and neither had been very tender to the fine suburban mansion which for the time was the headquarters of Major von Schönberg's battalion. There were shot-holes in the roof, the walls, and the parquet floor of the drawing-room which was now the common room of the officers, the furniture

of which was in a curiously fragmentary condition. A shell had burst in the grand piano that stood in the bay-window looking towards Avron, and had wrought indescribable havoc among the keys, hammers, and strings. The place was rather a favourite target both from Avron and Rosny, and we may be said to have lived within constant fire. While, for instance, Schulz had been making his report, a shell had exploded on the roof of the château. It is needless to mention that this occurrence did not occasion in that automatic person so much as the twinkle of an eyelid.

Christmas, the time of peace and goodwill among men, was but three days off, and soldier Claus Spreckels, with the blood still oozing on to the doorstep on which the body had been deposited, lay waiting while his grave was being dug. His would be the most recent, but the region round about us was one great graveyard of recent dead. But seven weeks previously, on the swelling peninsula a little to the south of us formed by the loop of the Marne, had occurred the desperate struggle that ended, after several bloody days, in the defeat of Ducrot's great sortie—a struggle in which Schönberg's battalion had lost half its officers and one-third of its rank and file. On the day before but one it had been fighting hard for six hours to repel the sortie of a French force heading up the Marne Valley from Neuilly, between the Maison Blanche and Ville Evrart.

That had been a strange scene on the evening be-

fore, when, under cover of the dusk—no vehicle dared move hereabouts in broad daylight—one of the battalion carts had brought out to us from the field post-office in Le Vert Galant the Christmas "love-gifts" (Liebesgaben), packed by loving hands, that came to those fore-post regions of blood and death from the quiet homes in distant Saxon-land. It was a curious medley of souvenirs that streamed out as the tail-board of the cart was let down in front of the quarter-guard behind the house occupied by the major.

The German Feldpost was a more elastic institution than had ever been a king's messenger's service-bag in the good old unreformed days. I do believe that if his friends at home had chosen to send to a soldier in the field a bee-hive or a rabbit-hutch, there would have been no objection on the score of bulk. Out rolled cigar-boxes stitched up in canvas wrappers, long cocoon-like shapes every outline of which spelt "wurst," flabby packages which evidently consisted of underclothing, and little boxes that rattled as they dropped and, for certain, contained thalers. A pile of gifts was stacked against the wall, and a space in front was cleared in which stood, wooden and stiff even when off duty, Under-Officer Schulz, calling out the name as each packet was handed up to him by a corporal. It was rather a dreary, even, indeed, a solemn roll-call, deeply eloquent of the casualties which war had wrought in the ranks of the battalion.

"Schumann!" called out Under-Officer Schulz.

"Shot dead in battle!" was the curt response.
"Caspar!"
"Wounded!"
"Stolberg!"
"Dead."
"Bergmann!"
"In hospital."
"Schräder!"
"Weg."

Now the dictionary definition of the word "Weg" is "away," "gone"; but on campaign it had a wide and rather vague significance. "Weg," then, might mean indeed almost anything: prisoner, missing, unburied, deserted—only that one never heard of a German soldier deserting. The sum and substance of the word was, "Not here, and Lord knows where he is!"

When Schulz had done, there was still quite a heap of packets which the men to whom they were addressed would never claim. I had seen Spreckels tear open the box of cigars addressed to him, before I left the place of distribution. Now he was lying dead on the slab there, with a bullet-hole through his head; and from between the buttons of his tunic stuck out some half-dozen of the cigars that had come to him overnight from his mother in Kamenz.

The French outpost line opposite to that section of the German front occupied by the Saxon Regiment followed a road which skirted the lower slope of Mount Avron, crossed the little valley in front of the village of

Villemomble which the French held, and then took up the line of the wall bounding the finely wooded park of the Château de Launay. Though here and there they approached more closely where the ground was broken, the opposing lines were for the most part distant from each other about eight hundred paces.

In most civilised wars it had been the humane custom that the outposts of two opposing armies in ordinary circumstances did not molest each other. In the Peninsular campaign this mutual forbearance was carried to curious lengths. In that excellent book, "The Subaltern," the late Chaplain-General Gleig gives many instances of the "excellent understanding" which prevailed between the armies, and of their genuine cordiality one towards the other. At one time "the Subaltern" used to go a-fishing in a river which divided the lines, and he tells how "many a time I have waded half across the little river on the opposite bank of which the enemy's pickets were posted, whilst they came down in crowds only to watch my success, and to point out particular pools and eddies where they thought I could find the best sport. On such occasions the sole precaution I took was to dress myself in scarlet, and then might approach within a few yards of their sentries without being molested."

Another instance which "the Subaltern" gives betokened so much too good an understanding between the outposts, as to cause Wellington to forbid all intercommunication whatsoever—a prohibition at which one

can scarcely wonder when the story is told:—"A field-officer, going the rounds one night, found that the whole sergeant's picket-guard had disappeared. He was both alarmed and surprised at the occurrence; but his alarm gave way to utter astonishment when, stretching forward to observe whether there was any movement in the enemy's lines, he peeped into a cottage from which a noise of revelry was proceeding, and beheld the party sitting in the most sociable manner with a similar party of French soldiers, and carousing jovially. As soon as the British officer presented himself, his own men rose, and, wishing their companions good-night, returned to their post with the greatest *sang froid.* It is, however, but justice to add that the sentries on both sides faithfully kept on their posts, and that on neither side was there any intention of desertion. In fact, it was a sort of custom, the French and British outposts visiting each other by turns."

Other times, other manners. In other respects than the observance of outpost etiquette, the French soldiers of 1870 were different from their ancestors of the Peninsular period. From the very beginning of the war, from the early days before Saarbrücken, before any battle had been fought, and therefore before defeat could have exacerbated the troops of the Second Empire, they had caught at every chance that offered of firing on the German outposts, sentries, and patrols. The first man I ever saw killed by a bullet was a poor fellow of the Hohenzollern Fusiliers—one of a "sly

patrol" which I was accompanying one July morning through the copses lining the base of the Spicherenberg. The French soldiers on the outposts of the Paris defence-line often were not regulars, and when they were regulars, were recruits who, if they had ever heard of them, had no respect for the old civilised traditions. Every reverse made them the more venomous; and the Germans, who at first showed a great deal of forbearance, had, by the winter season, long ceased to refrain from reprisals. Accordingly, during the siege of Paris, there was a miserably great amount of simple cold-blooded murder perpetrated on the foreposts. No other term than murder expresses the killing of a lone sentry by a pot-shot at long range. It was like shooting a partridge sitting. Of this wretched work the French had the better, because of the longer range of their chassepôts. Their marksmen used to remain on the outposts and practise this deliberate homicide; when they had potted some half-dozen Prussians at 1,000 yards, they took rank as heroes, and were fêted by the citizens when they gave themselves a holiday from their trade of cheap death. One of those slaughter-men it was whom Under-Officer Schulz had taken the liberty of describing as a "pig-dog." He had located himself, apparently permanently, in a cottage which had probably been the gardener's residence, about a couple of furlongs in front of the approach-gate of the Château de Launay; and for days previous to that on which poor Spreckels came by his end, the Frenchman had

occupied the period of daylight in taking deliberate aim at every Prussian soldier exposing himself within reach of the chassepôt. The Prussians had marksmen, and they had chassepôts too, by this time; but the fellow never gave them a chance. He shot out of a window, but he never showed himself, firing from the back of the room, and standing, no doubt, well out of the direct line of fire.

I fear I must own to the veteran's besetting sin of discursiveness. I apologise, and return to the departure of Under-Officer Schultz from the presence of Major Schönberg and his officers, after he had reported poor Spreckels as "expended."

"That scoundrel will decimate the battalion!" exclaimed the Major, as he took a long drink of the lager-beer, a little barrel of which had been among the Christmas love-gifts sent him by the Frau Majorin. "And," he added, "how to mend matters beats me!"

Then impulsive Captain Kirchbach, the Hanoverian, spoke out. "Let us rush the infernal hut, Major, and burn it down: that will destroy the fellow's cover. I volunteer to lead the arson-party. Why not to-night?"

"It must not be as you propose, Kirchbach," said the Major mournfully. "You know the French fore-post line is close in rear of the cottage—I suspect it moves forward with nightfall; and you know also that not half a rifle-shot to the rear there is a brigade of the red-legs in Villemomble. We'd risk them with as light a heart as Ollivier accepted the war, but you know my

orders are absolute not to do anything that might bring on fighting now, while they are making the battery-emplacements for the siege-guns up there behind us in front of Maison Guyot."

"Ach so!" came from half a dozen lips, in that long, undulating intonation which is so characteristic of the Saxon speech.

"And yet," piped little Hammerstein, "it is a cursed pity that our good fellows should be murdered thus."

"Fortune of war!" cried Helldorf the reckless, as he made for the herrings, sardellen, and schinken which a soldier-servant had just placed on a section of the shattered piano that did duty for a buffet; "if you are to be bowled over, it may as well happen on a 'sly patrol' as in the mêlée of Gravelotte. Spreckels' turn to-day; mine, mayhap, to-morrow! The Frenchman don't respect officers the least in the world. One of the seven he has already killed was, you will remember, our comrade Ensign von Ernsthausen."

"Permit me the word, Herr Major," spoken in a modest tone, were the bashful words that came from the mere lad in the light blue uniform who was standing by the door. The speaker was such a slight fellow, and had so young a face, that he did not seem full-grown. The moustache had not budded on his lip, but there was a fire in his eye and a quiet, modest resolution in the whole aspect of him, which gave the assurance that he was equal to a man's part. The brass scales on his shoulders showed him to be a cavalry-

man, the only representative of that arm present. His rank was that of Ensign, and he commanded the little detachment of the Crown Prince's Reiter Regiment which was detailed with the infantry battalion in the forepost line to perform orderly duty.

"Well, baron, are you going to offer to cut the fellow out with your galloping sergeant's party?" asked Schönberg, rather in a tone of banter—there was a little jealousy between the cavalry and infantry before Paris, as there mostly is during a long siege, because of the easy times the former have in comfortable quarters well to the rear. By the way, I have forgotten to mention that the name of the cavalry youngster was the Baron von und zu Steinfurst-Wallenstein. But if the young fellow had a swagger name, that was all of swagger there was about him; though, mere lad as he was, the Iron Cross was at his button-hole, gained in a slashing charge on the evening of Beaumont.

"I think, Herr Major," said the baron quietly, "my fellows would snatch at the opportunity if you were to give it them. But, of course, from what you have just told Captain Kirchbach, that is out of the question. Yet if you will allow me—my sergeant can see to the duty for a day or two—I should like to try whether, with good fortune, I may not stop this fellow's devilry. They reckon me the best game-shot with the sporting-rifle in our part of the Saxon Switzerland, and I have got my favourite weapon with me here. One never knows when one may

get a chance at something. What I want to do is to go and stalk this French devil. May I, Herr Major?"

"Oh, you may try your luck, and welcome, baron, for me," replied the major. "Mind, unless you bring his head back with you, we shan't believe you've wiped him out."

It must be said that, besides the rather elephantine badinage of the worthy major, the young cavalryman was the butt of a good many jokes that evening. It was the brilliant Helldorf who christened him "David," and offered to go and help him search around for an eligible stone to put into his sling. But the little baron took the chaff with a modest serenity, ate a hearty dinner (I have said he was a Saxon), renounced both the Frau Majorin's beer-barrel and the generous red wine which Kirchbach contributed to the joint-stock mess, and was in bed bright and early, after having first given his trusty rifle a thorough overhaul and filled a bandolier with Eley's best cartridges. Very early in the morning his batman brought him some breakfast. He dressed himself warmly, for the weather was very bitter, poured some schnaps into his pocket-flask, put some sandwiches into his haversack, and, rifle in hand, started out for the extreme front. He had the watchword and countersign, of course; but they would not avail to carry him outside the German cordon of advanced sentries, and that was just whither he meant to go. So at the *Repli* he had the officer on duty to go forward with

him to the outlying picket—the *Feldwache;* the sergeant in command of which, at the officer's order, escorted him through the outer chain of sentries. It was on the railway embankment close to the long since burnt Gagny station that he left the sergeant and the final double-post; and after descending into the hollow beyond, began to climb the gradual slope on the crest of which, among the trees, stood the Château de Launay. It was not yet dawn, but the morning was not very dark and it was rather ticklish work. The ground was covered with deep snow the surface of which was frozen hard, and the crystallised surface threw up a faint sparkle even in the darkness, while it crackled crisply under every footfall. Clumps of evergreens were dotted over the slope, and if they had a danger of their own as possibly concealing French outliers or patrols, they also gave the advantage of covering to some extent the young officer's advance. He had taken the bearings of the cottage to the watching of which he intended to devote himself, and instead of heading directly towards it, with the result that the hiding-place he designed to take up would be right in the French marksman's line of sight, he edged away somewhat to his own right, with intent to locate himself somewhere on the proper left front of the cottage. When about three hundred yards distant from it, he found himself close to a dense clump of evergreen shrubbery—a bosquet forming the outer fringe of the pretty grounds, in the heart of which stood, and no doubt still stands, the

villa then possessed by the late Dr. Nélaton, the famous surgeon of the Second Empire. This clump the baron penetrated, and lying down on the moss in the heart of it, whither the snow had not penetrated, he waited till dawn, and then gingerly twisted and broke the shrubs till he had a clear vista of aim on the cottage, now visible dimly through the frost-haze.

Its sharp-shooting occupant he judged to be cooking his breakfast, for the smoke was lazily rising from the chimney of the cottage. Then the sun came out and chased away the haze, and the baron thought he caught a glimpse of the dull gleam of a riffle-barrel back in the room inside the wide orifice where in peace-time there had been a window-frame. His first impulse was to aim a little behind where he had seen the glint, and then fire; but he restrained himself. In all likelihood, he reckoned as he steadied himself, not more than one chance would come to him, if even that much, so crafty, evidently, was the Frenchman. For that one hoped-for chance, then, it was for the baron to wait hour after hour with the patience of a red Indian—it might indeed be for days, for, to use Kirkpatrick's words, he was bound to "mak siccar." So he lay supine, gazing steadfastly at the white front of the cottage, up against which almost to the window-sill the whiter snow had drifted, making a bank sloping away from the wall, its frozen surface sparkling where the sun-rays struck it.

The hours passed wearily but intently. Three times the flash of a shot and the little pillow-like cloud of

white smoke had darted out from the window-space in the front of the cottage. For aught the baron could know, as he lay there in the slow torments of inability to accomplish his purpose, each shot meant the life gone from out a Saxon soldier. Would he risk a return shot? he asked himself each time, when next that cool, cruel devil up there pulled trigger. And each time the stern resolute answer he made to himself was, "No! be calm; everything comes to him who can wait."

The Frenchman fired a fourth time just as the sun was going down, but, as before, from out the gloom at the back of the room. When it became dark the lad, half frozen, stiffly rose and trudged his way back into the Saxon position. The sentries had been warned of his probable coming in, and did not interfere with him. He had rather a bad evening of it. During the day the marksman of the cottage had killed one sentry as he peered rather recklessly over the edge of the railway embankment, and had wounded another fellow when on "sly patrol" duty. The poor baron was ruthlessly chaffed. One officer supposed that he could not get his rifle to go off, another that he had gone to sleep and lost his opportunities; a third gave it as his deliberate conviction that the baron had spent the day fraternising genially with "Bob the Nailer."

The mansion occupied by the headquarters of Major Schönberg's battalion had belonged to an English family,

in whose library Hammerstein, who was himself half an Englishman, had found a history of the defence of Lucknow in the Indian Mutiny days, in which work was recorded the pestilential marksmanship of a native sharp-shooter, who from a turret opposite to the Bailey-Guard Gate used to take deadly pot-shots at members of the beleaguered garrison. The English soldiers, it seemed, had bestowed on this destructive individual the nickname of "Bob the Nailer"; and this appellation the Saxon officers had transferred to the objectionable Frenchman who did his shooting from the cottage in the foreground of the Château de Launay. Stern and serious business as is war, human nature is so constituted as to find a humorous side to the most ghastly transactions, but it must be owned that the complexion of the jokes is of the grimmest.

The little baron had an imperturbability beyond his years. The rough badinage of his comrades did not in the least disconcert him. He was modestly confident that if the Frenchman should but once give him the merest flicker of a chance, he could and would kill him; and he had the conviction that, be the man ever so artful, this morsel of good-fortune was bound, sooner or later, to come to him. Next morning before daybreak he was back in his lurking-place among Dr. Nélaton's evergreens, lying prone there, his rifle ever at the shoulder, his gaze centred steadily on the aperture in the wall of the cottage.

On the second evening he sauntered into Major Schönberg's salon, his manner quiet, unassertive—almost

timid, indeed, as was his wont. A shout of derisive laughter greeted his entrance.

"Back again empty-handed, O doughty younker?" shouted Kirchbach.

The battalion surgeon in his silkiest manner—he was a most sarcastic man, this quiet German Mr. Brown—asked whether "Bob the Nailer" stood in need of his professional services?

"Do you know, Herr Baron," said Captain von Zanthier with a sneer, "that your adversary up yonder bowled over another fellow of my company this afternoon?"

Then out spoke Major von Schönberg himself; from the outset he had considered Steinfurst's offer as rather a piece of impertinence.

"You have had two whole days, baron, for this experiment of yours with the rifle that wrought such execution in the Saxon Switzerland; to-morrow, if you please, you will return to your regular duty with your cavalry detachment."

"Zu befehl, Herr Major?" replied Steinfurst, springing to the attitude of rigid attention on receiving a formal order. That acknowledged, he relaxed his muscles as much as a German officer in his most unbending moments ever does, and made a few quiet observations. "I should not," said he, "have proposed going out again, major, in any case. Doctor, I don't think 'Bob the Nailer,' as you call him, has the slightest occasion to avail himself of your most valuable offer.

Captain Kirchbach, I have not come back empty-handed; I brought with me my rifle—its barrel is fouled."

Then immediately arose the loud clamour of questioning. "Have you really killed the fellow?" "Are you really serious?" and so forth.

The little baron, in his quietest manner, demurely replied, "Perhaps those gentlemen who are interested in this little matter will take the trouble to-morrow morning to go out to the front as far as the railway embankment, and from thence survey the front of the Frenchman's cottage through their field-glasses." And with that he bowed, said "Good-night!" and went away to his sleeping-quarters over the stables in which were the horses of his detachment.

Next morning was the morning of Christmas Day. In peaceful England, as throughout the German Fatherland—with peace indeed within its borders, but with sore or anxious hearts in palace and hovel, the church bells would presently be ringing out their chimes through the winter air. They were different sounds to which we listened that Christmas morning from the foreposts under the shadow of Mont Avron. From its blunt summit up yonder in the winter sunshine one of Colonel Stoffel's big guns at intervals gave fire, the great shell hurtling and screaming over our heads as it sped on its swift flight to wreak mischief in Clichy or Montfermeil on the upland behind us. Never for five minutes were the forepost lines wholly silent from that uncomfortable, venomous, intermittent crackle of musketry fire — so

futile, so savage, so bitterly eloquent of inveterate man-to-man hatred. The Feldpastor, a little later, would be essaying to deliver his message of "peace and good-will among men," mocked to his very face by those noisy tokens of strife and rancour; and for his poor consolation might bethink himself of the stern aphorism, *"À la guerre comme à la guerre."* The war and its devilry meantime did not hinder us, as we met soon after sunrise for morning coffee in the *salon,* from wishing each other "A Merry Christmas"; and, coffee drunk and cigars lit, we started on the errand which the baron had so enigmatically suggested overnight. The major, devoured though he was by curiosity, did not think it compatible with his dignity to go; the baron himself did not put in an appearance. The exploration party consisted of Kirchbach and his brother-in-law Hammerstein, Zanthier, Helldorf, Freiherr von Zehmen, three or four youngsters, and the Briton who had the run of the Maas Army forepost line from Sartrouville on the Seine north-west of Paris, round to Bonneuil and beyond to the Seine on the south-east.

When we reached the railway embankment we found the men of the picket peering over at the distant cottage, each man with his hand shading his eyes from the dazzle of the sun on the snow. Said the corporal of the picket to Captain Kirchbach:—

"There is something hanging out over the window-sill, Herr Hauptmann; it looks like the upper part of a great-coat with the hood falling lower between the arms."

Hammerstein had his sight soonest adjusted. "By God! it is a dead man!" he shouted on the instant.

Yes; he was right. Hanging limply there from the lintel of the orifice that had been a window was the upper portion of the figure of a man, inverted and perfectly motionless. The broad shoulders showed out distinctly against the white of the wall, as did the black hair of the occiput; the face of course was invisible, being towards the wall. The arms had dropped at full length, their extremities reaching down to the snow-bank piled up against the lower part of the cottage wall.

I was the only one of the party who carried a telescope. The binocular is handy, but its powers are limited. The telescope is a clumsier weapon, but once focussed and accurately aimed, it tells you twice as much as the best binocular. I had seen what I have just described through Hammerstein's binocular; now I proceeded to train my telescope on to the spot, and with its assistance to go more into detail.

What I saw was this. The clenched hands had clutched into the snow. The long hair hung straight, discoloured — a dingy crimson. A rifle had slipped away from the figure's grasp, and I could see it some twenty feet away from the window, lying on the level after it had skidded down the frozen slope of snow. There was no mistake about the matter; the baron had done his work thoroughly, and the sarcastic doctor's services were not in the least required.

It seems rather a ghastly sort of thing to recount; but, as a matter of fact, the French marksman's extermination—the Irish equivalent, "removal," was an inapplicable term—was accepted by universal acclamation as Baron Steinfurst's Christmas-box to the battalion. A deputation formed up to him after Divine service, headed by Under-Officer Schulz, who, heels duly clinked together, the proper degree of motionless rigidity satisfactorily attained, opened his lantern-jaws, stammered vigorously, then got out: "In name of battalion, a thousand thanks—verdammte Französische Schweinehund!" Whereupon he went about with right extraordinary abruptness, nor recovered his customary measured and angular gait until he had got away several paces from where the little baron stood blushing.

In as few words as might be, the modest lad told us the story as we stood around the piano buffet eating a scrappy luncheon. Till the afternoon of the second day of his watch he had resolutely held his fire, determined to wait till he could "mak siccar." During that day the Frenchman had fired several times, but had never given a glimpse of himself to the young marksman down among Dr. Nélaton's hollies and laurels. His last shot he fired just before dusk; this was the shot that killed the man of Zanthier's company, and the only occasion that day on which his fire took effect. He then, as ever, fired without exposing himself; but when the bullet had sped, he forgot himself for the first time during the two days. Anxious, no doubt, to ascertain

whether he had done execution, he had moved forwards out of his safe retirement, and projected his head and shoulders over the window-sill, peering out to his own right front—the direction in which he had fired. All this he did with a jerk. He was in the act of retracting himself when the little baron took his snapshot at him. Steinfurst had not for nothing practised rabbit-shooting with the rifle. The Frenchman dropped on the instant, falling, as we had seen him, with head and shoulders outside the window. The baron had seen the momentary convulsive grasp, the tearing up of the snow with the hands, and then the sudden stillness which showed that the "pig-dog" would take no more German lives. Being within range of the French forepost line in rear of the cottage, he did not quit his position until the dusk was merging into darkness. That was all he had to say.

The dead marksman had no successor in the occupation of the cottage. Strangely enough, the French never ventured up to it, although there could have been little risk in doing so under cover of night; and the body hung there as it had fallen until early in January, when Colonel Stoffel, his big guns, and his troops were bombarded away from the summit of Mont Avron by the fire of the German "walruses," as we used to call the siege cannon, from Maison Guyot and elsewhere. Then the French outpost line was of course drawn in, and the region about Villemomble and the Château de Launay lasped to the Saxons, who buried the dead sharp-shooter

under the window from which he had sped death so often while alive. He had regularly lived in the cottage, it seemed. It was found quite copiously victualled with bacon, tinned food, wine, and coffee; and the man had brought with him a small library of good solid reading, as well as writing materials. On the table in the back room there lay a half-finished letter which began, "Ma très chère femme," and which told in the most matter-of-fact manner of the results of his ball-practice. He sent his love to his children and begged them to pray for his continued success. He was not a soldier of the Line. He wore the coarse uniform of a private of the national guard, but his linen was fine and marked with a good name. In the left breast-pocket of his tunic was found the photograph of a handsome woman, with a little child at her knee and a baby in her arms.

No doubt the "verdammte Französische Schweinehund" was a devoted patriot according to his lights, and regarded himself as fighting the good fight *pro aris et focis*. There are so many different ways of looking at a thing, you see. Schönberg's fellows gave me the relics of the dead man when next I visited them. The capitulation could not be very far off now, and I should be early in Paris.

Well, the capitulation came, and I was early into Paris. One of the first things I did after attending to my work was to deliver the relics at the address I had, leaving along with them a short note. The sharp-shooter turned out to be one of our own profession. As did

so many other gallant French soldiers of the pen, he had run to arms the moment danger threatened the sacred soil. He had escaped from the field of Sedan to form an item in the huge garrison of Paris, and burning with zeal and devotion to duty, he had thrown himself into the unworthy business of pot-shooting. The poor wife thought him a veritable hero, and his work glorious and patriotic. His children had a cribbage-board, with the pegs of which they had proudly kept the tally of his homicides. I believe, before the Commune days came, that I had almost got to look at the matter from their point of view. I never knew sweeter children.

V.

PARIS IN PROSTRATION.

Tidings of Capitulation of Paris received at Margency, evening January 28th.—Inclusion of St. Denis Forts in Capitulation Convention.—January 29th, Crown Prince of Saxony entered St. Denis.—Attitude of St. Denis.—Solicitude of Inhabitants for Protection of Cathedral.—The Misery of the Five Days' Bombardment.—Devotion of International Ambulance.—Luncheon on Horse-flesh.—Entry into Paris, "Cochon," "Assassin."—Thankful for Prussian Money.—"Paris utterly Cowed."—Sadness and Self-respect.—American Legation.—Dr. Charles Gordon.—The last Fowl.—Questions and Answers.—Absence of Crime during Siege.—The Queues outside the Butchers' and Bakers'.

DURING the period from the surrender of Metz to the capitulation of Paris—in other words, from the beginning of November, 1870 until the end of January, 1871—I was attached to the headquarters of the Army of the Meuse, holding the northern and eastern sections of the investment of Paris. The chief of that army was the Crown Prince (now the King) of Saxony, who with his headquarter staff abode for the most part in the château of Margency, about ten miles due north of Paris, in the heart of the forest of Montmorency. At nine o'clock on the evening of January 28th, while the headquarter staff were assembled in the Crown Prince's drawing-room after dinner, an orderly brought in a telegram to the Prince. His Royal Highness, having

read it, handed it to General von Schlotheim his chief-of-staff. That officer perused it in his deliberate way; then rising, he walked to the open door communicating between the billiard-room and the salon, and there read the telegram aloud. It was in the name of the German Emperor, and it announced that two hours earlier Count Bismarck and M. Jules Favre had set their hands to a convention in terms of which an armistice to last for twenty-one days was already in effect. It was not easy to settle down to cards or billiards after such news as that.

The terms of the armistice included the capitulation of the St. Denis forts, which had undergone a five days' bombardment by the heavy guns that the German engineers and artillerists had brought up and located in prepared battery-emplacements in commanding positions. On the morning of the 29th the Crown Prince and his staff rode towards St. Denis. There was a long halt at the half-way village, to await the return of the officer who had gone forward into the place to arrange with the commandant for the surrender of the forts. Reports came that Admiral de Ronciere, the officer commanding in St. Denis, was sulky and impracticable and that the aspect of the French troops was threatening. Meanwhile two infantry regiments and four field-batteries had pushed forward and occupied a low eminence midway between St. Denis and Enghien; and a staff of engineer officers with a detachment of pioneers and artillerymen had gone on into

Fort de la Briche, to draw the charges from the mines and to take over the guns and magazines.

It was now afternoon, and although Major Welcke had not yet returned from the fortress, the Prince and his staff went forward. Near the enceinte Welcke was at length met, bringing the report that all the French troops had not yet evacuated St. Denis, and suggesting that as the civilian population, most part of which was armed, had rather a threatening aspect, a strong force of occupation should be sent on in advance. We rode forward with Fort de la Briche close on our right. It had suffered somewhat severely from the heavy German fire, but clearly no practicable breach had been effected. Fort du Nord, which was presently passed, had been more heavily dealt with. Great pieces of the earthwork had been torn away, and the wall of the scarp had been shattered and penetrated in places. A terrible fire had converged on the gate; one drawbridge had been demolished and the other could not be raised. Just inside the works there was a halt to permit the delegate from the French État Major to make some explanations. He came forward—a wan, sad-faced young officer of marine artillery, with a grave dignity in the pale face and in the weary, anxious eyes that commanded respect and commiseration. He was quite alone, and the solitary man looked forlorn yet full of a gallant mournful pride, as he rode up to the Crown Prince with a high-bred greeting that assuredly was not of republican France. His statement was that all the St.

Denis troops had been withdrawn into Paris, that the mobiles, national guard, and sedentaries had been disarmed, and that the population had come to its senses.

The supporting force being close up, a German military band struck up the "Paris March"; and behind the music the Crown Prince and his staff rode up the main street over shattered barricades and undrawn mines. The whole town was a ruin. There was a strange, un-French silence: one marked the lowering brows and caught many a *"Sacré!"* muttered from between the teeth. That all the arms had not been given up was very apparent: and the chief-of-staff ordered to the front the Crown Prince's escort of Saxon Guard-Cuirassiers. As the splendid horsemen clattered forward at a sharp canter, the women and children and indeed many of the men, ran into the battered houses shrieking, "The Uhlans! The Uhlans!" In the *Place* the Prince halted while there marched past him in solid ranks the brigade which had been detailed to garrison St. Denis, its band playing the "Paris March" and then "Ich bin ein Preusse." I could hear the French spectators gloomily owning one to another their admiration of the physique and soldierly bearing of the German troops. Strong patrols of occupation were at once marched into the forts, and a forepost line was established five hundred paces nearer Paris than the forts. The French commandant of Fort de l'Est reported that there had fallen in and on it during one day of the bombardment no fewer than 1,200 heavy shells.

When I rode into St. Denis in the forenoon of the 30th, I found that the town had in a measure recovered its tone since the German entry of the day before. Some business was already being transacted between the shop-keeping inhabitants and soldiers of the German garrison. I made in haste for the venerable cathedral, anxious to ascertain what amount of damage it had sustained. The Republicans who had painted *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité* on its portals had not allowed their republicanism to render them negligent of the historic edifice and the monuments it contained: the exterior had been banked up high all round with sandbags which had stopped many shells. Only four shells had penetrated into the interior. The mediæval stained glass was almost entirely intact. One of the elaborately-carved crosses on the top of a buttress had been splintered off, and a coping-stone had been shattered; this, it appeared to me, summed up the damage done to the cathedral from the shell-fire of the enemy. The aspect of the interior was very strange. The tombs of the kings of France had all been protected by sandbags; the statues had been enclosed by wooden frames and sandbags built around the framework. Considering the weight and duration of the bombardment, the cathedral had escaped wonderfully well. The same could not be said of the utterly-demolished houses in its vicinity, nor of the new church of St. Denis, the steeple of which was wrecked, one side of it stove in, and its interior a chaos of mortar, stones, and smashed para-

phernalia. The little Protestant chapel had suffered worse than any other religious edifice in St. Denis, and its poor pastor was to be seen trotting dolefully about, engaged in the task of picking up the fragments of his chapel from the open spaces in the vicinity.

It must have been verily the reign of the Prince of the Power of Darkness, that period of five days during which the bombardment of St. Denis lasted. The shells were continually crashing into the houses, and they were ploughing up the streets as with the deepest subsoil plough ever invented. There was no safety for any but in the cold and dark cellars; so heavy were the German projectiles that not always in the cellars was there found safety. There were houses the garrets and cellars of which had been battered into a shapeless mass of stone and mortar. If you asked the loafing bystanders whether any had been buried in the ruins, they moodily muttered "Qui sait?" shrugged their shoulders, and turned away. It seemed to me that there must be not a few unfortunates buried under those jagged rubbish heaps: but there was nobody who had interest or energy to explore, and "Qui sait?" might have stood for the vague epitaph.

It happened that in St. Denis during the bombardment there was a branch of the International Ambulance, the devoted members of which took their lives in their hands and bravely went out to do what good they might. They dragged the maimed and ailing out of the shattered houses, they collected the

corpses from the streets and the ruins, and they buried the dead with some semblance of decency. They went round the town urging that the women and children should go forth from the doomed town, and retire into Paris. The women and children had huddled into the semi-security of the cellars. The shells were crashing into the streets, and avalanches of stone and brick were continually crashing down upon the side-walks. The women peeping forth shudderingly, declared that they would rather die where they were than incur a more certain and fearful death by sallying forth into that tempest of iron, stone, and bricks. So they turned back to hunger and cold in the dank caverns, and cuddling their children to their bosoms utterly refused to budge. The Pastor Saglier had gone to the commandant and asked for permission to go out as a *parlementaire* and beg of the Germans to grant but two hours' cessation of the bombardment, that the women and children might have the opportunity to get away without the risk of being struck down as they went. The admiral refused, aud the ruthless devilry went on. Then the Pastor sent an appeal to the Paris journals, begging all who owned vehicles to send them to St. Denis for the removal of the women and children. The response was weak: there appeared not a solitary representative of those ambulances whose members took delight in flags and gave themselves to the vanities of brass buttons and fantastic uniforms. About half a dozen private vehicles did present themselves, and

the sick and wounded were removed into factories on the plain between St. Denis and Paris. Then children followed and women great with child, and then the other women, till the factories on the plain became like caravanseries. Meanwhile a detachment of this ambulance was engaged in carrying under cover the wounded struck down at the guns, toiling with a zeal and energy that merited better support. For that species of service the bold national guards did not offer themselves: their sphere of duty was the wine-shop. There they drank till their debauch made them reckless, and they sallied out into the streets, as often as not only to give the ambulance more trouble with their worthless carcases.

In the afternoon I accompanied two German officers in a ride beyond the foreposts in the direction of the Paris gate of La Chapelle. In the course of the day the restrictions on passing out of Paris had been materially relaxed, and the Avenue de Paris was thronged with the outward bound. It seemed to me that if they could get out I could get in, and quitting my companions I rode towards the gate. But as I went, it appeared advisable to make sure that I had the important document with me which vouched for me being a British subject, and, consequently, a "benevolent neutral." Alas, not anticipating the occurrence of such an opportunity I had left my passport in my Margency quarters, and there was no alternative but to postpone the attempt to enter Paris until the following

day. Next morning, that of 31st January, I started out better equipped. Calling *en route* on M. Saglier the good pastor of St. Denis, he hospitably asked me to have lunch. I accepted the invitation, he bade his servant "bring in the meat," and I made an assault with vigour and perseverance on the rather lean and ragged roast joint which was placed before me, the good cleric looking on benignantly the while. I asked no questions till the edge was off my appetite, when I inquired of the minister what I was eating

"Well," said he, "of course you are eating horse, and a very choice joint it is. I knew the animal very well while he was alive. He was young and plump and of a grey colour, which, it is well known, indicates tenderness."

The pastor had been eating horseflesh for four months; not because he was forced to do so, but because he had a numerous dependency of poor people to aid whom he chose to practise economy.

Taking leave of the good clergyman I rode towards Paris along the great *chaussée* to the gate of La Chapelle, which I found barred. After the group of which I was one had waited for half an hour, an officer appeared and shouted "To the gate of St. Ouen!" St. Ouen was the next gate to the northward, and we all therefore made to the right, I being mounted beating the others who were all on foot. This gate was open and a gendarme was examining passes. I rode on slowly, looking straight between my horse's ears; and

somehow no person in authority took any heed of me. As I rode down the Boulevard Ornano, I came upon sundry groups of more or less drunk national guards. One of those, as I passed him raised the shout *"A bas le Prussien!"* for which I own he had some reason since I wore a Prussian cap and paletot. He further complimented me by calling me "cochon" and "assassin." Others took up the cry, and matters were getting serious. The clamour was spreading and men tried to clutch hold of my bridle. I judged boldness to be the wisest policy; so, facing about, I pushed up to the man who had first shouted, proclaimed myself a harmless Englishman, and reproached my denouncer for molesting an inoffensive and peaceable wayfarer. The demon of cowardly and venomous suspicion had not yet been developed. A fortnight or so later, I should have thought myself fortunate to get clear off after having been marched back to the guard-house, half a dozen roughs on each bridle-rein, half as many more at each leg, and made to exhibit my passport to the officer on duty. But hunger is a wonderful agent in tending to influence men to concern themselves with their own business, and in keeping truculence in a state of dormancy. I cannot say, even after I had got rid of the citizens who had assailed me with cries of "cochon," that I much admired the aspect of the Boulevard Magenta. It was densely crowded with soldiers, and some of them might be unpleasantly patriotic. But no; they were all too much busied with

their own affairs, getting their pay and drinking it while they discussed events.

Halting to go into a shop to make an inquiry—I was not familiar with the geography of Paris—I called a soldier of the Line who was strolling on the pavement to hold my horse. On coming out I had a little talk with him. Yes, he had had enough of it! They had nearly killed him, those terrible Prussians, and he was very hungry. When would the gates open for the introduction of food? I put my hand into my pocket to find a tip for the poor fellow, when I discovered that I had only Prussian money. I asked him whether he could do anything with a ten-groschen piece. It was silver, and might have had the devil's pitchfork stamped upon it instead of the Prussian eagle, for all that the hungry linesman cared. Three weeks later it was not wise to carry, much less to show, German money.

"Paris is utterly cowed, fairly beaten," so said the first Englishman I met. I had not been long enough inside, either to agree with or to dissent from him. What I did see was that Paris was orderly and decent. The streets were crowded, almost wholly with men in uniform. Civilians were comparatively rare, and the few seen wore an aspect of dejection. Many shops were open, but a considerable proportion were closed. It seemed possible to purchase everything except edibles. There was assuredly no lack of intoxicants; yet with the exception of my friends in the Boulevard Ornano, I saw scarcely a tipsy man. The food shops had a very

sparse show in their windows. There were confitures, jellies, preserves, etc.; but solid comestibles were conspicuous by their rarity and probably also by their price. In one shop I saw several large shapes of stuff that looked like lard. When I asked what it was, I was told that it was horse-fat. The bakers' shops were closed, and the gratings were down before those of the butchers'. Sad with an exceeding great sadness—that was my impression of Paris long before I reached the American Legation; self-respecting, too, in her prostration; not blatant; not disposed to collect in jabbering crowds. Each man went his way with chastened face and listless gait.

After visiting the American Legation, where undisguised amazement was expressed at my appearance, I made my way to the little Hôtel St. Honoré in the Faubourg of the same name, and close to the British Embassy. I had filled my wallet chiefly with newspapers, and had stowed away for an exigency only a few slices of ham. When I reached my quarters the women-servants of the house asked permission to take the meagre plateful out and exhibit it as a curiosity to their neighbours; and visitors, attracted by the news, came straggling in and begged to see the long unaccustomed viand. The worthy landlord of the house, himself a Briton, had for his boarder throughout the siege Dr. (now Surgeon-General) Charles Gordon, the British medical Commissioner in Paris; and he took pride in asserting that the doctor had lived as well as any man

in Paris. When dinner came it bore out the boasts of our Boniface. Positively there was a fowl; pretty well, so it was said, the last fowl in Paris. Our host had been offered eighty francs for the bird while yet it had its feathers on, but had refused the tempting offer; and so we had him for dinner with my ham as an accompaniment—only I stood out of participation in the ham so that the rarity might go the further with the others. There are advantages in being a Scotsman, one of which this siege of Paris had developed in a curious way. There was some store of oatmeal in Paris. Porridge is a principal and palatable resultant from oatmeal, and some Scotsmen not only eat but enjoy porridge. Thus Dr. Gordon, a Strathdon man, had supped his wholesome and frugal bicker of porridge every morning, while men not born to the appreciation of that delicacy were giving themselves internal uneasiness by swallowing the stuff which in the later days of the siege still imposed on people under the conventional name of bread. Yet another national dainty was our host equal to, in the shape of a glass of such Scotch whisky as I had not tasted for months.

In a once famous, now dingy restaurant, I found at supper several of my journalistic comrades who had remained in Paris during the long siege. They were eating steaks of horseflesh, followed by ragout of dog; and the few scraps of bread on the table consisted of a sort of dingy paste of which about one half was sand. Horseflesh, as both they and I had learned, was very

fair eating; only one requires to get a little accustomed to it before one can wholly relish it. It has a curious sweetish taste, and the fat is scarce and not quite satisfactory. The Parisians during the siege had become quite connoisseurs in horseflesh, and it was universally recognised, as Pastor Saglier of St. Denis had already apprised me, that the tenderest joints were furnished by a young grey animal, and that the toughest meat was that of a no longer young chestnut horse. I did not try the dog: anyone who is curious as to this viand can easily kill a dog and make the experiment for himself. Some people averred that dog went best with mushrooms; others praised it eaten cold in a pie.

There needed no acuteness to discern to what a poignancy of wretchedness Paris had been reduced, before she had brought herself to endure the humiliation of surrender. That night she was alone with her grief and her hunger; not until the morrow came the relief and consolation which the sympathy of Great Britain so promptly forwarded to the capital of the ally with whom had been undergone the hardships and won the successes of the Crimean war. Wan, starved citizens crept by on the unlit boulevards, before and since the parade ground of luxury and sleek affluence. No cafés invited the promenader with brilliant splendour of illumination and garish lavishness of decoration; for there were few promenaders to be enticed, there was no fuel to furnish gas, and there were no dainty viands wherewith to trick out the plate-glass windows. The

gaiety, the profusion, and the sinfulness of the Paris which one had known in the days of the Second Empire, had given place to quiet uncomplaining dejection, to utter depletion, to a decorum at once beautiful, startling, and pathetic. The hotels were all hospitals. The Red Cross flag floated from almost every house, bandaged cripples limped along the pavements, and almost the only wheel traffic consisted in the interminable procession of funerals.

Very strange and touching was the ignorance in regard to the outside world. "I have seen three English newspapers since September," said Dr. Gordon. "Is Ireland quiet? Is Mr. Gladstone still Prime Minister? Is the Princess Louise married?" Such were samples of the questions I had to answer. The ignorance as to the conditions of the German besiegers was almost equally complete. The day after the negotiations for the capitulation began, Paris had been somehow assured that the investing army had not eaten for three days, and that it was Paris which was granting terms rather than the "Prussians." I was continually asked whether the latter had not been half-starved all through. What had they done for quarters? Whether they did not tremble in their boots at the mere name of the franc-tireurs? Whether they were not half-devoured by vermin? Whether the Prussian King still resided in Versailles?—the questioners had not heard of his having been proclaimed German Emperor; and so on.

The great and beautiful feature of Paris under siege

had been the absence of crime. No murders, no robberies, but a virtue in which there was really something pathetic. I had intended to walk about the city most of the night so as to make the most of my necessarily limited time. But before ten o'clock my promenade had become almost a solitary one. By nine the dim lights were extinguished in the kiosks, and the petroleum was waning in the sparse street lamps. By ten o'clock the world of Paris was left to darkness and to me; and so I went to bed. I woke up once in the night, and the dead silence made me for the moment imagine myself back in rural Margency.

It seemed that the pinch for food was more severe than ever, pending the result of the negotiations for its supply. From one who had paid the prices himself and had the precise figures down in black and white, I had the following list:—Two francs for a small shrivelled cabbage; one franc for a leek; forty-five francs for a medium-sized fowl; forty-five francs for a so-called rabbit —most probably a cat; twenty-five francs for a pigeon; twenty-two francs for a 2lb. chub; fourteen francs per lb. for stickleback; two francs per lb. for potatoes; forty francs per lb. for butter; twenty-five francs per lb. for cheese—very scarce. Meat other than horseflesh was absolutely not to be procured. I was assured that if I were to offer £50 down in bright shining gold for a veritable beefsteak, I should have no claimant for the money! The last cow that had changed hands had been bought for an ambulance, and fetched £80. The

few beasts still left could not be bought. The bread was abominably bad; something between putty and chopped straw bound together with farina starch and a little flour. But its badness was not the worst thing about it—the difficulty was to get it at all. Gentle and simple had to wait their turn in the queue in the bitter cold outside the shops of the butchers and the bakers. On the following morning, as I rode eastwards through Paris to gain the train which would carry me into a country whence it was possible to despatch telegrams, I saw great throngs outside both, chiefly women, waiting in silent shivering in the cold.

VI.

THE CRUSHING OF THE COMMUNE.

Left London for Paris 19th May, 1871.—Hindrance at St. Denis. —Advice of Crown Prince of Saxony.—The "Cocotte Train." —Entered Paris, Sunday, 21st.—The good lady of the kiosk.— The War Ministry of the Commune.—"No, I have Children!" —Dombrowski in the Château de la Muette.—Nonchalance in Shell Fire.—The Scared Commandant.—Dombrowski marches. —Fighting inside the Enceinte.—Entry of Versaillists.—Morning of 22nd.—Versaillist Plan of Campaign.—Hard Fighting throughout Week.—Embrasure-making.—The Target of a Firing Party.—Quit Paris Wednesday, 24th.—Bringing Tidings to London.—Return to Paris, 26th.—The Dead-hole in Père-Lachaise.—MacMahon's Announcement on 28th: "I am absolute Master of Paris."

THE Franco-German War was over. I had witnessed the great Kaiser's parade on the Longchamps racecourse on the 1st of March, 1871; and the same afternoon had accompanied the German troops who marched down the Champs Elysées into the Place de la Concorde and the wrecked gardens of the Tuileries. A week later I had ridden behind the old Emperor and the Crown Prince of Saxony as the former reviewed the "Maas Armee" which the latter commanded, drawn up on the plateau between Champigny and Brie, among the grave mounds beneath which lay the Germans and the Frenchmen who had fallen in the stubborn fighting of Ducrot's

great sortie on the east side of Paris. Then my field work was done; and I had hurried home to London to begin the task which I had set myself of writing a book describing what I had seen of the great conflict.

I was toiling ten hours a day at this undertaking when the Commune broke out. Promptly the manager of the *Daily News* dashed upon me in a swift hansom, and urged me with all his force to start for Paris that same night. I declined; I was under contract to my publishers and I burned to see my first book in print. For two months that peremptory manager gave me innumerable bad quarters of an hour, for he was not being served to his liking by the persons whom, in my default, he had commissioned to "do" the Commune for him. At length, on the afternoon of May 19th I finished the last revise of my book, and the same evening—to the great relief of my managerial friend, for a desperate crisis in Paris was clearly imminent—I left London by the Continental Mail.

In those troubled times the train service of the Northern of France railway was greatly dislocated, and it was nearly mid-day of the 20th when we halted in the St. Denis station. I foreboded no difficulty, since the halt at St. Denis was normal for ticket-collecting purposes; and I was chatting with a German officer of my acquaintance who commanded the detachment of the Kaiser Alexander Prussian Guard regiment in occupation of the St. Denis station. The collector serenely took up my ticket. There followed him to the carriage

door two French gendarmes, who, with all the official consequentiality of their species, demanded to be informed of my nationality. I enlightened them on that point, and turned to continue the conversation with von Bergmann. But it seemed that the gendarmes were not done with me. They peremptorily ordered me to alight. I requested an explanation, and was told that no more foreigners were now permitted to enter Paris, as the fighting force of the Commune was understood to be directed chiefly by desperadoes not of French nationality. "But," said I, "I am a newspaper correspondent, not a fighting man." "*N'importe,*" replied the senior gendarme, "you look, too, not unlike a military man. Anyhow, you must alight!"

"What does this mean, Bergmann?" I asked, when I had obeyed. "Surely you can do something for me, in charge as you and your fellows are of the station?" "No, my dear fellow," replied the Prussian officer: "we are here only to maintain order. Two days ago these swallow-tailed gentlemen came from Versailles, and our orders are not to interfere with them." The train went on, leaving me behind; then the senior gendarme came up to me and told me that I should have to return to Calais by the next outgoing train. A thought struck me, and I pleaded hard to be allowed to take instead a local train to Enghien-les-Bains, a few miles off near the forest of Montmorency, where von Bergmann told me was still residing the Crown Prince of Saxony to whose staff I had been attached during the siege of Paris.

Bergmann added his persuasions to my solicitations and finally the gendarme thus far mitigated my sentence.

The Crown Prince was at luncheon when I reached the château in which he had his quarters. He roared with laughter when I told him how the French gendarme had served me. "Those people at Versailles," his Royal Highness explained, "have been leaving the mouth of the trap open all these weeks, and pretty nearly all the turbulent blackguards of Europe have walked into the snare. Now the Versaillists believe that all the blackguards are inside; and since they are just about to begin business, they have stopped both ingress and egress. Still," he continued, musingly, "I am surprised that they did not let you in!" The Prince had something of a sardonic humour, and he made his point; I, for my part, made him my bow in acknowledgment of his compliment. Presently the Prince remarked: "Mr. Forbes, when you were with us in the winter we used to think you rather a *rusé* and ingenious man; but I fear that now, since you are no longer with us, you have become dull. Have you never heard the proverb that there are more ways of killing a pig than by cutting its throat? There is a railway to Paris, my friend; and there is also a *chaussée* to Paris. On the railway there are these French gendarmes; on the *chaussée* there is only a picket of your friends of the Kaiser Alexander regiment, who have no orders to stop anyone. Now, you join us at luncheon; then we shall have coffee and you will smoke one of those long corkscrew cigars which

you may remember; and in the evening you will take the 'cocotte train' here in Enghien. If the gendarmes at the St. Denis station haul you out a second time, make them a polite bow and walk into Paris by the *chaussée;* or, for that matter, you can take the 'bus from St. Denis."

It was already dusk when I boarded the "cocotte train"; and I ensconced myself between two young ladies of gay and affable manners, who promised so to conceal me with their ample skirts when we should reach St. Denis that the gendarmes would be unable to unearth me. The train was full of the frail sisterhood of Paris, who were wont to pay afternoon visits to the German officers of the still-environing army and who were now returning to town. Fairly hidden as the ladies and I considered myself, the lynx-eyed gendarme detected me and I again had to alight. A commissary of police in the station courteously offered me quarters for the night, but assured me that my entrance into Paris was impossible. I declined his offer and went out into the street, where I found the German soldiers enforcing the old curfew laws. "Everybody must be indoors by nine o'clock," said the grizzled sergeant, "else I take them prisoners, and they are kept for the night and fined five francs in the morning." He did not interfere with me because I spoke German to him; and I found a hay-loft where I slept. The charge for sitting for the night in a room in St. Denis was ten francs: beds were luxuries unattainable by casual strangers.

On the morning of the 21st I left St. Dennis by road, and walked straight into Paris without hindrance. The national guards of La Chapelle were turning out for service as I passed through that suburb, and there seemed nothing to find fault with either in their ap pearance or their conduct. Certainly no reluctance was manifest on the part of the citizen-soldiers, but indeed the reverse. Paris I found very sombre, but perfectly quiet and orderly. It was the Sabbath morn, but no church-bells filled the air with their music. It was with a far different and more discordant sound that the air throbbed on this bright spring morning—the distant roar of the Versaillist batteries on the west and south-west of the enceinte. "That is Issy which gives!" quietly remarked to me the old lady in the kiosk at the corner of the Place de l'Opéra, as she sold me a rag dated the 22nd and printed on the 20th. I asked her how she could distinguish the sound of the Issy cannon from those in the batteries of the Bois de Boulogne. "Remember," she replied, "I have been listening now for many days to that delectable bicker, and have become a *connaisseuse.* The Issy gun-fire comes the sharper and clearer, as you may hear, because the fort stands high and nothing intervenes. The reports from the cannon in the Bois get broken up, for one thing, by the tree-trunks; and then the sound has to climb over the enceinte, the railway viaduct, and the hill of Passy." She spoke as calmly as if she had been talking of the weather; and it seemed to me, indeed, that all the few

people who were about shared the good woman's nonchalance. Certainly there seemed nowhere any indication of apprehension or expectation that the Versaillist hand was to be on the Communist throat before the going down of that Sabbath sun.

I had a horse in Paris, which I had left there since the days of the armistice. It was the same noble steed on which I had ridden in through the gate of St. Ouen, the "first outsider" into Paris after the capitulation, on which occasion the hungry Bellevillites had gazed upon the plump beast with greedy eyes. My earliest quest now was for this animal. I found it, but there was an armed sentry on the stable. The Commune had requisitioned the horse, and the stable-keeper had resisted the requisition on the ground that it belonged to a foreigner. The matter had been temporarily compromised by the posting of a sentry over the animal until the authorities should have maturely weighed the grave question. The sentry declined to depart when I civilly entreated him, nor would he allow me to take out the horse; so in the meantime I had to leave the matter as it stood. From the stable I went to the War Ministry of the Commune, on the south side of the river. The utter absence of red-tape and bureaucracy there, was quite a shock to the mental system of the Briton. I remember having been pervaded by the same sensation when, years later, I went to see the late General Sherman in the Washington War Department. Ascending a staircase—in Paris, not in Washington—I entered a great

room full of sergeants and private soldiers bustling to and fro. Unheeded I passed into an inner room, where I found the man whom I wanted writing among a number of other men in uniform and a constantly changing throng of comers and goers. "Can I see the Chief-of-Staff?" I asked. "Of course you can—come with me!" We went into a third room, a fine apartment with furniture in the style of the First Empire: officers swarmed here from commandants to lieutenants. Privates came in and had a word, and went away. Amid the bustle there was a certain order, and also, seemingly, a certain thoroughness. Without delay I was presented to an officer, who, I was told, was the *sous-chef* of the Staff. I told him that I desired to witness the military operations in the capacity of a correspondent. With a bow he turned to a staff-lieutenant and bade him write the order. The lieutenant set to work at once. He asked me whether I wanted an order for the exterior as well as for the interior operations, and said *"bon"* approvingly when I told him that I wanted an order which would allow me to go anywhere and see everything. The *sous-chef* signed it with the signature "Lefebre Toncier;" told me if ever I needed any favour or information to come to him; and made me a civil bow. I think I may reckon that this was the last permit issued to a correspondent and signed by Communist authority.

General Dombrowski was the last of the many generalissimos of the Commune; he had held the com-

mand for about a day and a half. His headquarters, I was told, were away out to the west in the Château de la Muette, a little way inside the enceinte and close to the railway-station of Passy on the ceinture line. I went to the cabstand in the Place de la Concorde and bade the first cabman drive me to the château. "No, monsieur; I have children!" was the reply. I got a less timid *cocher* who agreed to drive me to the beginning of the Grande Rue de Passy. As we passed the Pont de Jéna the Communist battery on the Trocadéro began to give fire. Mont Valérien replied. Shell after shell from that fortress fell on the grassy slope on which I had seen the German soldiers, on their entry into Paris on March 1st, lie down and drink their fill of its beauties. One shell felled a lamp-post on the steps close by, and burst upon the pavement. My driver struck, and very nearly carried me back with him in his hurry to be out of what he evidently considered an unpleasant neighbourhood. There was nothing for me but to alight, and to go on foot up the Grande Rue. Here there was hardly any resident population, but a large colony of shell holes. National guards, sailors, and franc-tireurs had quartered themselves in the abandoned houses, and lounged idly on the sidewalks in comparative shelter. There were nowhere any symptoms of uneasiness, although the shells were dropping into the vicinity with great freedom. At the further end of the street I turned to the right through a large gateway into a short avenue bordered by fine trees, at the end of which I entered

the Château de la Muette. Dombrowski gave me a most hearty and cordial greeting, and at once offered me permission to attach myself to his staff permanently, if I could accept the position as it disclosed itself. "We are in a deplorably comic situation here," said he, with a smile and a shrug, "for the fire is both hot and continuous!"

Dombrowski was a neat, dapper little fellow of some five feet four, dressed in a plain dark uniform with very little gold lace. His face was shrewd—acuteness itself; he looked as keen as a file, and there was a fine frank honest manner with him, and a genial heartiness in the grip of his hand. He was the sort of man you take to instinctively, and yet there were ugly stories about him. He wore a slight moustache, and a rather long chin-tuft which he was given to caressing as he talked. He spoke not much English but was very fluent in German. His staff consisted of eight or ten officers, chiefly plain young fellows who seemed thoroughly up to their work, and with whom, not to be too pointed, soap and water seemed not so plentiful as was their consummate coolness. Dombrowski ate, read, and talked all at once, while one could hardly hear his voice for the din of the cannonade and the yell of the shells. He showed great anxiety to know whether I could tell him anything as to the likelihood of German intervention, and it struck me that he would be very glad to see such a solution of the strange problem. We had got to the salad when a battalion commandant, powder-grimed and flushed, rushed

into the dining-room and exclaimed in great agitation that the Versaillist troops were streaming inside the enceinte at the gate of Billancourt, which his command had been holding. The cannonade from Issy had been so fierce that his men had all got under shelter; and when the Versaillists came suddenly on and his men had to expose themselves and deliver musketry fire, the shells, he said, fell so thick and deadly that they bolted, and then the Versaillists had carried the porte and now held it. His men had gone back in a panic. He had beaten them—yes—*"sacré nom,"* etc.—with the flat of his sword until his arm ached, but he had not been successful in arresting the panic and his battalion had now definitively forsaken the enceinte. The Versaillists were massing in large numbers to strengthen the force that had already carried the gate of Billancourt. Dombrowski waited quietly until the gasping commandant had exhausted himself, then handed him a glass of wine with a smile; turned with a serene nod to his salad and went on eating it composedly and reflectively. At length he raised his head, and ordered in a strong voice—

"Send to the Ministry of Marine for a battery of seven-pounders; call out the cavalry, the *tirailleurs* [of some place or other; I did not catch where], and send forward such and such battalions of national guards. Let them be ready by seven o'clock. I shall attack with them, and lead the attack myself."

The Ministry of Marine, I may observe, had been

turned into an arsenal. It was a curious sign of the time that the officer to whom Dombrowski dictated this order, like himself, a Pole, did not know where to find the Ministry of Marine. Directions having been given to him as to its locality, the lieutenant then suggested that he might not be able to obtain a whole battery.

"Bring what you can then," exclaimed Dombrowski; "two, three, four guns—as many as you can, and see that the tumbrils are in order. Go and obey!"

"Go and obey!" was the formula of this peremptory, dictatorial, and yet genial little man. He had a splendid commanding voice and one might have judged him accustomed to dictation, for he would break off to converse and take up the thread again, as if he had been the chief clerk of a department.

While Dombrowski was eating his prunes after his salad—like most Poles, he seemed a miscellaneous feeder—there came bustling in a fussy commandant with a grievance. His grievance was thus expressed: "General, I have been complained against because I have too large a staff, and have been ordered to bring the return to you." Dombrowski silently took from him the return and read it. Then he broke out in a passion. "A commandant!" he exclaimed, "and with a staff of ten officers! What!" Here he rose and swept his arm round the table with a gesture of indignation. "Look, citizen commandant! Here am I, the general, and behold my staff, nine hard-working men; and you, a commandant, have ten loafers! I allow you one secretary;

go and obey!" and the discomfited commandant cleared out.

The shell fire was increasing. Dombrowski told me that the Château de la Muette belonged to a friend of M. Thiers, and that, therefore, although it was known to be his—Dombrowski's—headquarters, there were orders that it should be somewhat spared. All I have to say is, that if there were indeed any efforts made to spare the château the Versaillist gunners were shocking bad shots. While we sat one shell came through the wall bounding the avenue; another struck the corner of the house so hard that I thought it was through the wall. Dombrowski's nerves were strong, and he had trained his staff to perfection. When this shell burst he was speaking to me. I started. I don't think his voice vibrated a single chord. The officers sitting round the table noticed the explosion no more than if it had been a snapping-bonbon at a ball supper. A soldier-waiter was filling my cup with coffee. The spout of the coffee-pot was on the edge of the cup. There was no jar; the man's nerves were like iron. There was certainly good, quiet, firm undemonstrative stuff here, whatever there might have been elsewhere. Dombrowski's adjutant took me upstairs to the roof where there was an observatory. The staircase and upper rooms had been very freely knocked about by the shell fire, notwithstanding the friendship of M. Thiers for the owner of the château. The observatory, which was constructed of thick planking, was nevertheless riddled with

chassepôt bullets; and when I showed myself incautiously on the leads I drew fire with an alacrity so surprising, that I was not in the slightest degree ashamed to make a precipitate retreat.

The park of the Château de la Muette sloped down to the enceinte in front of Passy. One could scarcely see the enceinte for the foliage. Beyond the enceinte was a belt of clearing, then came the dense greenery of the Bois de Boulogne, and behind this green fringe was the bed of the great lake. From this fringe of wood great isolated puffs of smoke were darting out. Those were from single cannon. I saw no massed battery. But there were clearly at intervals single cannon in small emplacements at distances from the enceinte of from 400 to 500 paces. From the edge of the fringe also, behind little trenches at the throats of the drives, smaller puffs spurted from the chassepôts of Versaillist marksmen trying to pick off the Communists on the enceinte and on the advanced hornworks in front of the gates of Passy and Auteuil. Just above the gate of Passy the Communists had a battery on the enceinte which was firing steadily and with good effect. The gate of Passy was not much injured and might have been stormed by a resolute forlorn hope, were it not for the earthen outwork thrown up during the Prussian siege. The gate of Auteuil and the enceinte for some distance on each side were utterly ruined. This Dombrowski did not attempt to deny. But he pointed out that the advanced earthwork was held—

and strongly held; not an obstacle, perhaps, it seemed to me, to thwart men bent on gaining an object or losing their lives, but quite sufficient to all appearance, to keep the cautious Versaillists from exposing themselves in the open on the way to it. Farther south, by the gate of Billancourt and round to the Seine, the enceinte was no great things to boast of. Certainly no man needed wings to get inside thereabouts. In proof of this, since I had joined him, Dombrowski, as I have related, had received tidings that the Versaillists had carried that gate.

There was a good deal more of risk than amusement in remaining in the observatory; and I descended presently to the ground floor. Dombrowski was standing sword in hand, dictating three orders at the same time. He stopped to ask me what I thought of the prospect I had looked down upon from the roof. I could not conscientiously express the opinion that it was reassuring from the Communist point of view. "I am just dictating an order," said Dombrowski, "which will inform Paris that I am abandoning the enceinte from the Porte d'Auteuil to the river. If you are a military man you must recognise the fact, that our loss of Fort Issy has made virtually untenable that section of the continuous line of fortification of which I speak. Its province was to co-operate with, not to resist, Fort Issy. For several days past I have foreseen the necessity of which I am now informing Paris, and I have prepared a second line of defence, of which the railway viaduct

defines the contour and which I have made as strong as the enceinte and more easily tenable. Yes; the Versaillists are in possession of that gate you heard the flurried commandant talk of. They may have it and welcome; the possession of it will not help them very much. But all the same I don't mean to let them keep their hold of it without giving them some trouble; and so I am going to make an attack on them to-night. As like as not they will fall back from their occupancy of to-day, and then they will have their work to do over again to-morrow. But I am not going to fight with serious intent to retrieve this condemned section of enceinte, as the order which I have been dictating for publication will show; but merely, as I may say, for fighting's sake. There is plenty of fight still in our fellows, especially when I am leading them."

I could not for the life of me make up my mind then, nor have I done so to this day, whether Dombrowski's cheerful words were mere *blague* or whether the little man was really in dead earnest. With a promise from him that he would not start on his enterprise without me, I went into a side room to write a few lines for my newspaper. I had finished and was instructing the soldier messenger whom Dombrowski's adjutant was good enough to place at my disposal, where to deliver the packet containing my message, when an urgent summons came to me to join the general. The little man I found on the outside of a very lofty charger, which was dancing about the lawn on its hind legs.

For me, alas! there was no mount, big or little; my horse was in the stable behind the Rue Faubourg St. Honoré with that relentless sentry standing over him. Messenger after messenger had come hurrying in from the Point du Jour quarter entreating for immediate succour, as the holders of the positions thereabouts were being hard pushed. The cannonade and fusillade from the Seine all the way to the Neuilly gate and probably beyond, continued to increase in warmth as we hastened down the Rue Mozart. The Versaillist batteries were in full roar; and it was not possible, even if some guns still remained undismounted on the enceinte, to respond effectively to their steady and continuous fire of weighty metal. Some reinforcements were waiting for Dombrowski on the Quai d'Auteuil, partly sheltered by the houses of the landward side of the quay from the fire which was lacerating the whole vicinity. The tidings which greeted the little general were unpleasant when he rode into the Institution de Ste. Périne, which was temporarily occupied as a kind of local headquarters. It was the Commandant of the 93rd national guard battalion who had come to the Château de la Muette in the afternoon to tell Dombrowski how his men had been driven from the gate of Billancourt. From what I could hurriedly gather there had subsequently been a kind of rally. National guards had lined the battered parapet of the enceinte between the gates of Billancourt and Point du Jour, and farther northward to and beyond the St. Cloud gate. For some

time they had clung to the positions with considerable tenacity under a terrible fire, but then had been forced back with serious loss, mainly by the close and steady shooting of the Versaillist artillery from the breaching batteries about Boulogne and those in the more distant Brimborion. The St. Cloud gate, as well as that of the Point du Jour, had followed the Billancourt gate into the hands of Versaillist troops who, having occupied the enceinte in force and the adjacent houses inside the enceinte, had pushed strong detachments forward to make reconnaissances up the Rues Marois and Billancourt, one of which bodies at least had penetrated as far as the railway viaduct but had been driven back.

Dombrowski smiled as this news was communicated to him; and I thought of his "second line of defence," and of his assurance that "the situation was not compromised." By this time it was nearly nine o'clock, and it seemed to me that the Versaillists must have got cannon upon or inside the enceinte, the fire came so hot about the Institution de Ste. Périne. Dombrowski and his staff were very active and daring, and his troops seemed in good heart enough. There was some cheering on the order to advance, and the troops, consisting chiefly of francs-tireurs and men wearing a zouave dress so far as I could discern through the gloom, moved out from behind the railway embankment into the Rue de la Municipalité—that was its name then, but I believe it is now called the Rue Michel. A couple of guns—only field guns, I believe

—opened fire on the Ceinture railway to the left of the Rue de la Municipalité, and under their cover Dombrowski's infantrymen now debouched with a short-lived rush. Almost immediately after, however, utter disorganisation ensued, the result of a hot and close rifle fire which seemingly came chiefly from over a wall which I was told enclosed the Cimetière des Pauvres. The Communists broke right and left. One forlorn hope I dimly saw spring forward and go at the corner of the cemetery wall in the angle formed by a little cross-street, under the passionate leadership of a young staff-officer whom I had noticed in the Château de la Muette at dinner time. There was a few moments' brisk cross-fire; then the Communist spurt died way and the fugitives came running back, but without their gallant leader. Some affirmed that Dombrowski himself took part in this rash, futile attempt; but the locality was too warm for me to be able to speak definitely on this point. Meanwhile there seemed to be almost hand-to-hand fighting going on all along the exterior of the railway embankment. I could hear the incessant whistle and patter of the bullets and the yells and curses of the Communists, not a few of whom evidently owed the courage they displayed to alcoholic influence. Every now and then there came a short rush, then a volley which arrested the rush, and then a stampede back into cover. Soon after ten it was obvious that the fight was nearly out of the Communists. Dombrowski I had long since lost sight of. One officer told me that he had been killed close to

the graveyard wall; another, that his horse had been shot under him and that the speaker had last seen the daring little fellow fighting with his sword against a Versaillist marine who was lunging at him with the bayonet. After the Commune was stamped out, accusations of treachery to the cause he was professing to serve were made against Dombrowski. All I can say is that so far as I saw anything of him, he bore himself as a true man and a gallant soldier, and, seeing that before the Commune ended he had lost his life in the struggle, it seems the reverse of likely, as was averred, that he had sold himself to the Versaillists. He came of a fighting race. An ancestor of his was one of the gallant Polish leaders under the first Napoleon.

Then came a sudden and apparently general panic and I was glad to make good my retreat behind "the second line of defence," which was not easily recognisable as a line of defence at all, and concerning which I suspected Dombrowski had been gasconading. Once behind the railway, the Communist troops held their ground for some time with a show of stiffness. Occasional outbursts of firing indicated desultory attacks made by detached parties of Versaillists; but those flashes of strife gradually died away and about eleven o'clock the quietness had become so marked, that I thought the work was over for the night and that Dombrowski's anticipations had been at least partly realised. The pause was deceptive. The Versaillists must have been simply holding their hands for the time, to make

the blow the heavier when it should fall. No doubt they had their combinations to mature in other directions—no doubt they were pouring in force into the area between the enceinte and the Ceinture railway. They were comparatively quiet for their own purposes while they were doing this—lining the enceinte and packing the thoroughfares with troops and artillery. We could hear in the distance behind us the *générale* being beaten in the streets of Paris. A staff-officer who spoke English, as if it were his mother tongue, came to me and told me how he mistrusted the pause, and expressed his fear that the supreme hour had come at last. It must have been near midnight when a strong fire of cannon and musketry opened from the enceinte. At the same time there came on the wind the sound of heavy firing from the northward. I heard someone shout "We are surrounded! The Versaillists are pouring in by the gates of Auteuil, Passy, and La Muette!" This was enough. A wild panic set in. The cry rose of "Sauve qui peut!" mingled with yet more ominous shouts of "Nous sommes trahis!" Arms were thrown down, accoutrements were stripped off, and everyone bolted at the top of his speed, many officers taking part in the *débâcle*. I came on one party—a little detachment of franc-tireurs—standing fast behind the projection of a house, and calling out that all the chiefs had run away and had left their men. Whether this was the case as regarded the higher commands I could not tell. I do not believe that Dombrowski was the man

to run, nor any of his staff. But certainly none of them was to be seen. There was the cry, too, that there was a Versaillist inrush from the south. And so men surged, and struggled, and blasphemed confusedly up the quay of Passy in wild confusion, shot and shell chasing them as they fled. In the extremity of panic mingled with rage, men blazed off their pieces indiscriminately and struck at one another with the clubbed butts. Upon the battalions coming up in support there surged the rushing tide of fugitives, thus imparting their panic to the newcomers and carrying them away with them in the torrent.

There was an interval of distracted turmoil during which in the darkness and in my comparative ignorance of that part of Paris, I had no idea for a time whither I was being carried in the throng of fugitives. The road was wide, and I was able to discern that it was bounded on the right by the Seine; it was by after-reference to the map that I found the thoroughfare we had been following was the Quay of Passy. After a while I struck out of the press up a silent way to the left, and for a time wandered about in utter ignorance of my whereabouts. I could hardly tell how it came about that in the first flicker of the dawn I found myself on the Trocadéro. There was a dense fog which circumscribed narrowly my sphere of vision, and I knew only that I was standing on sward in an utter solitude. A few steps brought me into the rear of a battery facing westward, from which all the guns had been carried away

except one which had been dismounted, evidently by a hostile shell, and it now lay among the shattered fragments of its carriage. Close by, no doubt killed by the explosion of the shell which had wrecked the gun, were two or three dead Communist gunners. As it became lighter and the fog was slowly dispersing, the slopes of the Trocadéro disclosed themselves on my left, and I realised that I must be standing in the Trocadéro battery of which I had heard Dombrowski speak on the previous afternoon. Looking westward along the Avenue de l'Empereur—now the Avenue Henri Martin —I saw a battery of artillery advancing up it at a walk, with detachments of sailors abreast of it on each side-walk. I had not to ask myself whether these troops advancing with a deliberation so equable, could belong to the beaten and panic-stricken levies of the Commune. No! that could not be. They were, for sure, Versaillist troops coming on to take possession of the Trocadéro position. Indeed, had there been no other evidence, their method of announcing themselves by half a dozen chassepôt bullets fired at the lone man standing by the battery, would have been conclusive. I took the hint to quit, and started off abruptly in the direction of the Champs Elysées. I came out on the beautiful avenue by the Rue des Chaillots about midway between the Arch of Triumph and the Rond Point. And lo! round the noble pile which commemorates French valour there stood in close order several battalions of soldiers in red breeches. Thus far then, at all events, had penetrated

the Versaillist invasion of Paris in the young hours of the 22nd. The French regulars were packed in the Place de l'Étoile as densely as had been the Bavarians on the day of the German entry some three months earlier. No cannon fire was directed on the Versaillist masses from the great Communist battery on the Place de la Concorde end of the gardens of the Tuileries; but men in national guard uniform were showing themselves about it and now and then sending a rifle-bullet into the ranks of the Versaillists by the Arch. The latter, for their part, seemed to be taking things very deliberately, and to be making quite sure of their ground before advancing farther. They had a field-battery in action a little way below the Arch, which swept the Champs Elysées very thoroughly. I saw several shells explode about the Place de la Concorde, and was very glad when I had run the gauntlet safely and had reached the further side of the great avenue. I was making towards the Parc Monceau when a person I met told me that Versaillist troops marching from the Arch along the Avenue de la Reine Hortense (now the Avenue Hoche) had come upon Communists throwing up a battery, and had saved them the trouble of completing it by taking it from them at the point of the bayonet. Here I very nearly got shut in, for as we talked there was a shout, and looking westward I saw that a strong force of Versaillists with artillery at its head, was marching along the Avenue Friedland towards the Boulevard Haussmann. I was just in time

to dodge across its front, and tracking the force by side-streets I found that it pressed on steadily, firing now and then but not heavily, until it reached the open space at the upper end of the Boulevard Haussmann, in front of the Pépinière Barracks. This was a singularly commanding position, and thus early one could fathom the tactics of the Versaillists. Occupying in strong force and with a numerous artillery certain central points from each of which radiated several straight thoroughfares in different directions, their design clearly was to cut Paris up into sections, isolating the sections one from another by sweeping with cannon-fire the bounding streets. From this position at the Pépinière, for example, they had complete command of the Boulevard Haussmann down to the foot of it at the intersection of the Rue Taitbout, and of the Boulevard Malesherbes down to the Madeleine, thus securing access to the Grand Boulevards and to the Rue Royale, by descending which could be taken in reverse the Communist battery at its foot facing the Place de la Concorde. Desirous of seeing what might be occurring in other parts of the city, I made my way by devious paths in the direction of the Palais Royal. Shells seemed to be bursting all over Paris. They were time-fuse shells, and I could see many of them explode in white puffs high in air. Several fell on and about the Bourse while I was passing it, and the boulevards and their vicinity were silent and deserted save for small detachments of national guards hurrying backwards

and forwards. It was difficult to tell whether the Communists meant to stand or fall back; but certainly everywhere barricades were being hastily thrown up. All those I evaded until I reached the Place du Palais Royal. Here two barricades were being constructed, one across the throat of the Rue St. Honoré, the other across the Rue de Rivoli between the Louvre and the hotel of the same name. For the latter material was chiefly furnished by a great number of mattresses of Sommier-Tucker manufacture which were being hurriedly pitched out of the windows of the warehouse; and also by mattresses from the barracks of the Place du Carrousel. The Rue St. Honoré barricade was being formed of furniture, omnibuses and cabs; and in the construction of it I was compelled to assist. I had been placidly standing in front of the Palais Royal, when a soldier approached me and ordered me to lend a hand to the work. I declined, and turned to walk away; whereupon the soldier brought his bayonet down to the charge in unpleasantly close proximity to my person. This was an argument which in the circumstances I could not resist, and I accompanied him to where a red-sashed member of the Committee of the Commune was strutting to and fro superintending the operations. To him I addressed strong remonstrances, explaining that I was a neutral and exhibiting the pass I had received from the War Department the day before. He bluntly refused to recognise this document, and offered me the alternatives of being shot or going

to work. I was fain to accept the latter. Even if you have to do a thing by compulsion, it is pleasant to try to do it in a satisfactory manner; and observing that an embrasure had been omitted in the construction of the barricade notwithstanding that there was a gun in its rear, I devoted my energies to remedying this defect. The Committeeman was good enough to express such approbation of the amendment I had made, that when the embrasure was finished he very civilly allowed me to go away. Looking up the Rue de Rivoli I noticed that the Communists had erected a great battery at its junction with the Place de la Concorde, armed with cannon which were in action, firing apparently up the Champs Elysées. Leaving the vicinity of the Palais Royal I went in the direction of the new Opera House. On reaching the boulevard I discovered that the Versaillists must have gained the Madeleine between which and their position at the Pépinière no obstacle intervened; for they had thrown up across the Boulevard de la Madeleine a barricade of trees and casks. The Communists, on their side, had a barricade composed chiefly of provision-waggons across the boulevard, at the head of the Rue de la Paix. For the moment no firing was going on; and as it was getting towards noon I determined to try to reach my hotel in the Cité d'Antin and there obtain some breakfast.

Leaving the boulevard by the Rue Taitbout, I found my progress hampered by a crowd of people as I approached the foot of the Boulevard Haussmann. By

strenuous pushing and shoving I got to the front of this throng, to witness a curious spectacle. There was a crowd behind me. Opposite to me, on the further side of the Boulevard Haussmann, another crowd faced me. Between the two crowds was the broad boulevard, actually alive with the rifle-bullets sped by the Versaillists from their position about a thousand yards higher up. On the iron shutters of the shops across the foot of the boulevard — shops in the Rue Taitbout — the bullets were pattering like hailstones, some dropping back flattened, others penetrating. This obstacle of rifle-fire it was which had given rise to the massing of the crowds on each side. Nor were the wayfarers thus given pause without obvious cause, for in the space separating the one crowd from the other lay several dead and wounded who had dared and had suffered. My hunger overcame my prudence, and I ran across without damage save to a coat-tail through which a bullet had passed making a hole in my tobacco-pouch. A lad who followed me was not so fortunate; he got across indeed, but with a bullet-wound in his thigh.

Having ordered breakfast at my hotel in the Cité d'Antin, a recessed space close to the foot of the Rue Lafayette, I ran out to the junction of that street with the Boulevard Haussmann, just in time to witness a fierce fight for the barricade across the latter about the intersection of the Rue Tronchet. The Communists stood their ground resolutely although falling fast under the overwhelming fire, until a battalion of Versaillist

marines made a rush and carried the barricade. It was with all the old French *élan* that the marines leaped upon and over the obstacle, and lunged with their sword-bayonets at the few defenders who would not give ground. Those who had not waited for the end fell back towards me, dodging behind lamp-posts and in doorways, and firing wildly as they retreated. They were pursued by a brisk fusillade from the captured barricade, which was fatal to a large proportion of them. Two lads standing near me were shot down. A bullet struck the lamp-post which constituted my shelter, and fell flattened on the asphalt. A woman ran out from the corner of the Rue Chaussée d'Antin, picked up the bullet, and walked coolly back clapping her hands with glee.

After eating and having written for a couple of hours, I determined to make for the Northern Railway terminus and attempt to get a letter to my paper sent out. One saw strange things on the way. What, for instance, was this curious fetish-like ceremony going on in the Rue Lafayette at the corner of the Rue Laffitte? There were a waggon, a mounted spahi black as night, and an officer with his sword drawn. A crowd stood around, and in the centre of the strange scene was a blazing fire of papers. Were they burning the ledgers of the adjacent bank, or the title-deeds of the surrounding property? No. The papers of a Communist battalion it was which were thus being hurriedly destroyed, no doubt that they should not bear witness against its members. The little episode was a significant indication

of the beginning of the end. Nor were other tokens wanting for English passports were being anxiously sought for. At the terminus the unpleasant report was current that the Prussians were shunting at St. Denis all the trains leaving Paris, and were preventing everybody from passing their lines. There was but one chance. I suborned a railway employé of acute aspect to get out of Paris by walking through the railway tunnel, and, should he reach St. Denis, to give my letter to a person there whom I could trust to forward it. My emissary put the missive cheerfully in his boot and departed, having promised to come to my hotel at 8 p.m. and report his success or failure. I never saw him or heard of him any more.

On my way back from the Gare du Nord I met with an experience which came near being tragical. Hearing firing in the direction of the Church of Notre Dame de Lorette, I left the Rue Lafayette for the Rue Châteaudun. When I reached the open space in the centre of which stands the beautiful church, I found myself inside an extraordinary triangle of barricades. There was a barricade across the end of the Rue St. Lazare, another across the end of the Rue Lorette, and a third between the church and the front of the Place looking into the Rue Châteaudun. The peculiarity of the dispositions consisted in this—that each of these barricades could either be enfiladed or taken in reverse by fire directed on any or all of the others, so that the defenders were exposing themselves to fire on flanks

and rear as well as from front. I took up a protected position in the church porch to watch the outcome of this curious state of things. But the officer in command happening to notice me, approached and ordered me to pick up the musket of a man who had just been bowled over, and to take a hand in the defence of the position. I refused, urging that I was a foreigner and a neutral. He would by no means accept the excuse, swearing angrily that he too was a foreigner yet was fain to fight, and giving me the choice of the cheerful alternatives of forthwith complying or being incontinently shot. I did not believe him, and, indeed, laughed at him. Thereupon he shouted for four of his men to come and place me up against the wall of the church, and then act as a firing party. They had duly posted me and were proceeding to carry out the programme to its inconvenient ending, when suddenly a rush of Versaillist troops came upon and over the Rue St. Lazare barricade. Thereupon the defenders precipitately evacuated the triangle, the firing-party accompanying their comrades. I remained, not caring for the society I should have to accompany if I fled; but I presently came to regard my fastidiousness as folly, for several shots from Versaillist rifles came too near to be pleasant. One bullet went through my hat; and in a twinkling I was in Versaillist grips and instantly charged with being a Communard. The people in the red breeches set about sticking me up against the church wall again, when fortunately I saw a superior officer and appealed to him. I was bidden

to hold up my hands. They were not particularly clean, but there were no gunpowder stains on the thumbs and forefingers. Those stains were, it seemed, the brand marking the militant Communard, and my freedom from them just pulled me through. It was a "close call"; but then a miss is as good as a mile.

Late in the afternoon the drift of the retreating Communists seemed to be in the direction of Montmartre, whence their guns were firing over the city on the Versaillist artillery now in great measure massed on the Trocadéro. The Versaillists, for their part, were also moving deliberately in the Montmartre direction, and before dusk they had reached the Place de l'Europe at the back of the St. Lazare terminus. From this point on the north they held with their advanced forces a definite line down the Rue Tronchet to the Madeleine. They were maintaining their fire along the Boulevard Haussmann, and from their battery at the Madeleine they had shattered the Communist barricade on the Boulevard des Capucines at the head of the Rue de la Paix. The Communists were undoubtedly in part demoralised; yet they were working hard everywhere in the construction of barricades.

About eight p.m. the firing had died out almost everywhere, and for an interval there was an all but dead calm. What a strange people were those Parisians! It was a lovely evening, and the scenes in the narrow streets of the Rue Lafayette reminded me of the aspect of the "down-town" residential streets of

New York on a summer Sunday evening. Men and women were placidly sitting by their street doors, gossiping easily about the events and rumours of the day. The children played around the barricades; their mothers scarcely looked up at the far-away sound of the *générale*, or when the distant report of the bursting of a shell came on the soft night wind. Yet on that light wind was borne the smell of fresh blood, and corpses were littering the pavement not three hundred yards away.

Shortlived was the halcyon interval of quietude in Paris during the late evening of Monday, May 22nd. Before midnight, as I lay in my clothes on a sofa in the Hôtel de la Chaussée d'Antin, I could not sleep for the bursting of the shells on the adjacent Boulevard Haussmann. In the intervals of the shell-fire was audible the steady grunt of the mitrailleuses, and I could distinctly hear the pattering of the bullets as they rained on and ricocheted off the asphalt of the boulevard. There came in gusts throughout the night the noise of a more distant fire, the whereabouts of which it was impossible to locate.

The dismal din, so perplexing and bewildering, continued at intervals all through the night; and daybreak of the 23rd brought no cessation of the noise. Turning out in the chilly dawn, and from the hazardous corner of the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin looking cautiously up the Boulevard Haussmann, I saw before me a weird spectacle of desolation and slaughter. Corpses strewed

the broad roadway and lay huddled in the recesses of doorways. Some of the bodies were partially shrouded by the foliage of the branches of trees which had been torn off by the storm of shot and shell. Lamp-posts, kiosks, and tree-stems were shattered or upset in all directions. The Versaillists, at least hereabouts, had certainly not advanced during the night: indeed it seemed that they had in a measure drawn back, and that the Communists were now holding positions which the day before they had abandoned. The big battery of the former in front of the Pépinière Barracks at the head of the Boulevard Haussmann, a position beyond which the Versaillists had attained to on the previous day, was still, so far as that boulevard was concerned, the apparent limit of their occupation in force, although they held as an advanced post the slight barricade which they had taken the day before across the boulevard and about half-way down it, at the intersection of the Rue Tronchet. Over this outpost the battery at the Pépinière was steadily sending the fire of cannon and mitrailleuses towards the eastern end of the boulevard, where a few national guards still prowled about behind casual cover, firing a shot now and then into the intermediate barricade. Communist sergeants were running about the side streets and the Rue Lafayette, ordering the inmates of houses to close their windows but to open their shutters—this, no doubt, as a precaution against Versaillist sympathisers firing down on the insurgents from the house-fronts. It was to be

noticed that there had been no attempt anywhere on the part of the Communists to occupy the houses and fire from them on the advancing Versaillists. They had been content to utilise the shelter of barricades and such cover as the streets casually afforded. The Versaillists, on the other hand, were reported to be freely occupying the houses and to be firing down from the windows. This I did not yet know of my own knowledge; but I did know that they were for the most part extremely cautious in exposing themselves; and that, except in isolated instances, they had shown little enterprise and had done scarcely anything in the way of hand-to-hand fighting.

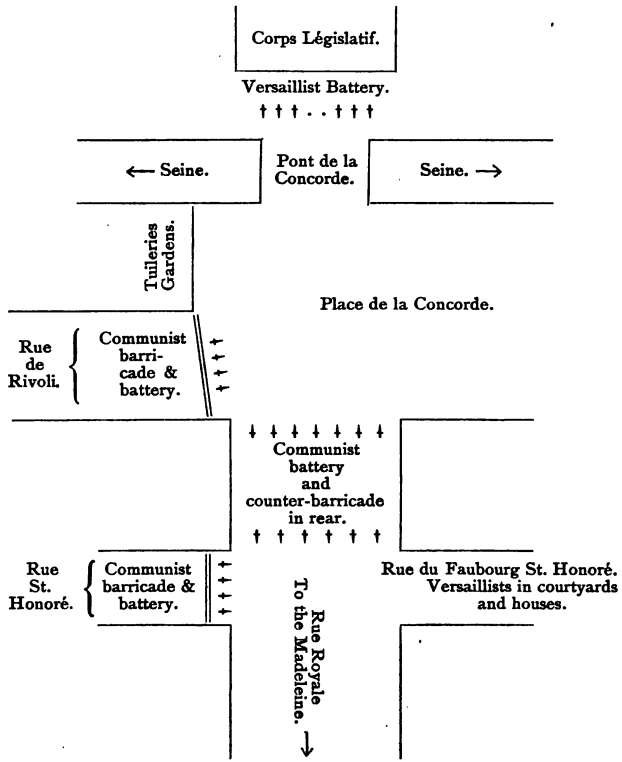
About six o'clock I went for a walk—not an unmixed pleasure just at the moment, nor to be indulged in without considerable circumspection. Getting into the Boulevard des Capucines I found it still held by strong bodies of national guards, a large proportion of whom were very drunk notwithstanding the early hour, while all were quite at their ease and in lively spirits. The cross-barricade between the head of the Rue de la Paix and the corner of the Place de l'Opéra, which had been shattered the day before by artillery fire from the Versaillist position at the Madeleine, had been restored, strengthened, and armed with cannon and mitrailleuses. Nay, more: I was assured by Communist officers that the night-firing one had heard had mainly been directed by them from this barricade, and that it had compelled the Versaillist withdrawal from the

Madeleine position. There was a certain confirmation of this in the fact that the Grand Boulevards were now quite unharassed by Versaillist fire, save for occasional vagrant obuses which appeared to come from the Trocadéro direction. I did myself the honour to partake of morning coffee with an hospitable but particularly tipsy squad of national guardsmen. They had been fighting, they said between their yawns, through the greater part of the night; and they owned, without any great concern, that there had been not a few casualties among them during the hours of darkness. Their women —I do not imagine that many of those were linked to their men by the bond of marriage—had come to them in the early dawn bringing food and the spirits which had caused the intoxication that obviously affected, more or less, quite three-fourths of the detachment with the members of which I was casually and temporarily consorting. It was rather a chilly morning for the time of year; and fires were alight and blazing cheerfully. Over the fires the good ladies of the detachment were making coffee and handing it round among their men, who insisted on lacing the beverage with brandy, and pressing on the ladies the rough-and-ready and somewhat rudimentary *mazagran*. It was a comforting drink enough; and I had no hesitation, but the reverse, in hobnobbing with the male and female Communists of the boulevards.

Leaving my boon companions, I then struck southwards, down towards the Palais Royal, to ascertain how

it had fared during the night with the Rue St. Honoré and the Rue de Rivoli. Several of the cross-streets had suffered considerably from the shell-fire which was still slowly dropping; but the barricades at the Place du Palais Royal were intact, armed, and garrisoned; and the great barricade across the Rue de Rivoli at its junction with the Place de la Concorde was still strongly held by the insurgents, sure evidence that the Versaillists were not yet in possession of the Place. The Rue St. Honoré, along which I walked westwards, was crossed by frequent barricades strongly manned by detachments of drunken but resolute men. The strongest barricade was at the junction of the Rue St. Honoré with the Rue Royale. Just here I witnessed one of the strangest imaginable cross-question and crooked-answer spectacles. The Versaillists held in force the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré west of the Rue Royale. They were thus in rear of the great Communist battery facing the Place de la Concorde at the foot of the Rue Royale, yet could not take it in reverse because of the cross-fire from the battery which stood across the head of the Rue St. Honoré. And they were further blocked by the Versaillist fire from the front of the Corps Législatif across the Seine on the further side on the Place de la Concorde, directed against the Communist battery at the foot of the Rue Royale, and sweeping that thoroughfare in its rear. The following diagram will make the curious situation more clear: it was a deadlock the forcing of which neither side seemed inclined to attempt.

The situation as things stood was passively in favour of the Communists:—



To all seeming there were now no Versaillists about the Madeleine, whither on the previous day they had

reached in force and where apparently they had made good their foothold. Clearly their policy was to take no risks, and to economise as much as possible in the matter of their own skins. A direct offensive effort along the wide bare boulevard would certainly have cost them dear; and, fresh as the red-breeches were from their German captivity, their spirit was probably not quite an assured thing. It became presently plain, however, that the policy of the Versaillist leaders overnight had been *reculer pour mieux sauter.*

Returning towards my hotel, I recognised how the Versaillist troops were engaging in the development of a great turning movement by their left. Yesterday they had reached the St. Lazare terminus, apparently on their way to Montmartre. Now they had sure grip of the Place and Church of the Trinité at the head of the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, and were working eastwards by the narrower streets in preference to traversing the wider Boulevard Haussmann. Between ten and eleven o'clock we in the hotel heard the din of a fierce fire at the back of the Cité d'Antin; and running out into the Rue Laffitte I discerned that the Versaillists had regained the Place de Notre Dame de Lorette—the mantrap triangle in which I had got involved on the previous afternoon; and were now fighting their way along the Rue de Châteaudun, which opens into the Rue Lafayette considerably eastwards of the Cité d'Antin. Meanwhile a heavy Versaillist fire was being maintained down the Boulevard Haussmann, so that my

hotel seemed to be in imminent danger of being surrounded. Regaining the front of it and going into the Rue Lafayette, I looked up eastwards to the barricade across it at the junction of the Rue de Châteaudun and prolonged across the issue of the latter street; and I could see its Communist defenders firing vehemently along the Rue Châteaudun. At length, after a strong resistance, they broke, and the Versaillists gained the commanding position. I watched the red-breeches climbing over the barricade as they poured out of the Rue Châteaudun and established themselves in possession of the barricade across the Rue Lafayette. Now (at 1 p.m.) they were firing westwards down the latter street into the lower end of the Boulevard Haussmann, while other Versaillist troops were pressing down that wide boulevard, firing heavily, and covered by shell-fire describing a parabola over their heads and falling in front of them. Thus the scanty Communist detachments still hanging about the foot of the Boulevard Haussmann —not, it was true, numerically strong, but singularly obstinate—were taken simultaneously in front and rear, and indeed in flank as well; for rifle-fire was reaching and striking them down the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin from the Church of the Trinité. Parenthetically I may observe that, standing in the lee of a projection at the foot of the Rue Lafayette, I was hemmed in between three separate fires. There was not a civilian out of doors anywhere within sight: even the women who had been so fond of shell-fragments were under cover now.

Communard after Communard, finding the Boulevard Haussmann considerably too hot to hold him, was sneaking away out of the devilry, availing himself of the protection afforded by the Opera House.

Yet the Versaillists still hung back. At half-past two they had not got so far down the Boulevard Haussmann as to be abreast of the Opera House, from the arms of the Apollo on the summit of which the red flag still floated. The Versaillists simply would not expose themselves. About five-and-twenty obstinate Communists, coming out from the cross streets, were blocking the advance of the Versaillist column with an intermittent fire. Ten minutes of the *pas de charge* would have given the regulars the boulevard from end to end; but they would not make the effort, and instead were bursting their way from house to house and taking pot-shots from the windows. This style of cover-fighting on their part, of course left the boulevard free for artillery and mitrailleuse fire, and certainly neither was spared. The Versaillist shells and bullets were passing my corner in one continuous shriek and whistle; the crash of falling stucco and the clash of broken glass were incessant. So scanty were the defenders that scarcely any execution was done by all this expenditure of ammunition, but it probably tried the nerves of the few Communists left to fight it out to the bitter end. Yet their efforts were truly heroic. Just as all seemed over they got a cannon from somewhere up to the head of the Rue Halévy, and brought it into action against the Versaillist

position at the Church of the Trinité. All was weird and curious chaos. It was only of one episode that I could be the witness; but the din that filled the air told vaguely of other strenuous combats that were being fought elsewhere. Above the smoke of the villainous gunpowder the summer sun was shining brightly, and in spite of the powder-stench and the smell of blood, the air was balmy. It was such a day as made one long to be lying on the grass under a hawthorn-tree in blossom watching the lambs at play, and made one loathe this cowering in a corner, dodging shot and shell in a most undignified manner and without any matches wherewith to light one's pipe.

For another hour or more my neighbours the Communists, who had been reinforced, gave pause to the Versaillist effort to descend the Boulevard Haussmann, and were holding their own against the Versaillist fire from the Place of the Trinité and from the barricade on the rise of the Rue Lafayette. The house at the left-hand corner of the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin and the Rue Lafayette—the house whose projecting gable had been my precarious shelter so long—had caught fire, to my disquietude and discomfort; but before the fire should seriously trouble me the impending crisis seemed likely to be at last over. Furious and more furious waxed the firing all around. About the Opera House it was exceptionally fierce. I had glimpses of fighting at close quarters in the open space before its rear front, and I could discern men shuffling along

behind the low parapet of its roof. They carried packs, but I could not see the colour of their breeches and therefore was not wholly certain that they were Versaillists. A woman had joined me in my post behind the gable—a woman who seemed to have a charmed life. Over and over again she walked out into the fire, looked deliberately about her, and came back to recount to me with excited volubility the particulars of what she had seen. She was convinced that the soldiers on the roof of the Opera House were Versaillists; yet, as I pointed out to her, the *drapeau rouge* still waved above the statue on the summit of the lofty edifice. The people of the hotel in our rear clearly shared her belief. Gathered timidly in the porch they were shouting "Bravo!" and clapping their hands, because they hoped and believed that the Versaillists were winning.

The woman was right; they were Versaillist linesmen whom we saw on the parapet of the Opera House. There was a cheer; the people of the hotel ran out into the fire, waving handkerchiefs and clapping their hands. The tricolor was waving now above the hither portico of the Opera House. The red flag floated still on the further elevation. "A ladder! a ladder to reach it!" was the excited cry from the group behind me; but for the moment no ladder was available. As we waited impatiently there darted down the side-walk of the boulevard to the corner of the Rue Halévy a little grig of a fellow in red breeches—one of the old French linesman breed. He was all alone, and he seemed to

enjoy the loneliness as he took up his post behind a tree, and fired his first shot at a Communard dodging about the intersection of the Rue Taitbout. When is a Frenchman not dramatic? He fired with an air, he reloaded with an air, he fired again with a flourish, and was acclaimed with cheering and hand-clapping from the "gallery" behind me to which the little fellow was playing. Then he beckoned us back dramatically, for his next shot was to be sped up the Rue Lafayette at a little knot of Communists who from a fragment of shelter at the intersection of the Rue Laffitte were taking him for their target. Then he faced about and waved his comrades on with exaggerated gestures which recalled those one sees in a blood-and-thunder melodrama, the Communist bullets all the while cutting the bark and branches of the tree which was his cover. Ah! he was down! Well, he had enjoyed his brief flash of recklessness. The woman by my side and I ran across and carried him in. We might have spared ourselves the trouble and risk: he was dead, with a bullet through his head.

This little distraction had engrossed us for only a few minutes; the moment it ended thus tragically, all our attention went back to the scene on the roof of the Opera House. A ladder had at length been got up, and a Versaillist soldier was now mounting the statue of Apollo on the front elevation of the building, overhanging the Place de l'Opéra. He tore down the *drapeau rouge* and substituted the tricolor just as the

head of a great column of Versaillist troops came streaming out of the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin across the Boulevard Haussmann, and down the wide streets towards the Grand Boulevards. The excitement was hysterical. The inhabitants rushed out of the houses with bottles of wine, from their windows money was showered down into the street, the women fell on the necks of the sweating dusty men in red breeches and hugged them with frantic shouts of *"Vive la ligne!"* The soldiers fraternised heartily, drank and pressed forwards. Their discipline was most creditable. When their officers called them away from the conviviality and the embraces, the men at once obeyed and reformed companies promptly at the double. Now that the Versaillist wave had swept over us for good, we were again people of law and order, and thenceforward abjured any relations some of us smug citizens might have temporarily had with those atrocious miscreants of Communists who were now getting so decisively beaten. Everybody displayed raptures of joy, and Communistic cards of fellowship were being surreptitiously torn up in all directions. It was now no longer "citoyen" under pain of being held a suspect; the undemocratic "monsieur" revived with amusing rapidity.

The Versaillist troops—horse, foot, and artillery—pouring in steady continuous streams down the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin and the Rue Halévy, debouched into the great boulevard at the Place de l'Opéra, taking in flank and rear the insurgents holding positions there-

abouts, and getting presently a firm grip of the Boulevard des Capucines westwards almost to the Madeleine. This was done not without hard fighting and considerable loss, for the Communists fought like wild cats and clung obstinately to every spot affording a semblance of cover. Even when the success described had been attained the situation was still curiously involved. The Versaillists, moving down the Rue de la Paix, were threatening the Place Vendôme but avoiding close quarters. The Communists, for their part, threatened as they thus were with being cut off, nevertheless still held obstinately their artillery barricades at the foot of the Rue Royale and at the western end of the Rue St. Honoré. The rear face of the former had been fortified and armed; and so, although the Versaillist artillery hammered at its proper front from the Corps Législatif, its rearward guns were able to interfere with the Versaillist efforts to make good a hold on the much-battered Madeleine.

I was exceedingly anxious to get some intelligence sent out, for nothing had been transmitted from the hermetically sealed capital for three days; and in order to ascertain whether there was any prospect of the despatch of a bag to Versailles from the Embassy in the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, I started up the now comparatively quiet Boulevard Haussmann, and by tacks and zigzags got into the Rue d'Aguesseau, which debouches into the Faubourg nearly opposite to the British Embassy. Shells were bursting very freely in the neighbourhood, but my affair was urgent, and from the corner

of the Rue d'Aguesseau I stepped out into the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, intending to dart across to the Embassy gates. I drew back hastily as a shell-splinter whizzed past me close enough to blow my beard aside. The street was simply a great tube for shells; nothing could live in it. Hoping that the firing might soon abate, I waited in an entry for an hour. Around about me were several ambulances, as the field hospitals had come to be called in the recent war. Into one close by I saw, during a quarter of an hour, one wounded man carried every minute: I timed the stretchers by my watch. In others into which I looked the courtyards were full of mattresses and groaning men. A good many corpses, those chiefly of national guards, lay in the streets, behind the barricades and in the gutters.

It fell dusk as I waited, the fire rather increasing in intensity than abating, and I would spare no more time. As I returned towards my hotel I had to cross the line of Versaillist artillery still pouring southwards from the Church of the Trinité, and thence down the Rue Halévy towards the quarter where the noise indicated that hot firing was still proceeding. The gunners received a wild ovation from the inhabitants of the Chaussée d'Antin. Where, I wondered, had the good folk secreted the tricolor flag during all those days of Communist domiciliary visits? It hung now in the still air from every window, the shouts of *"Vive la ligne!"* stirring it occasionally with a lazy throb. Stray bullets whistled everywhere—the women in their crâzy courage had

come to call them sparrows. And as the night closed in, there came from the Rue St. Honoré, from the Place Vendôme, and from the vicinity of the Palais Royal and the Hôtel de Ville, the noise of heavy, steady firing of cannon, mitrailleuse, and musketry, accentuated occasionally by explosions which made the solid earth tremble.

After a night of horror which seemed interminable, there broke at length the morning of Wednesday, May 24th. When the sun rose, what a spectacle flouted his beams! The flames from the palace of the Tuileries, kindled by damnable petroleum, insulted the soft light of the morning, and cast lurid rays on the grimy recreant Frenchmen who skulked from their dastardly incendiarism to pot at their countrymen from behind their barricades. How the palace blazed! The flames revelled in the historic rooms, made embers of the rich furniture, burst out the plate-glass windows, brought down the fantastic roof. It was in the Prince Imperial's wing, facing the gardens of the Tuileries, where the demon of fire first had his fiercest sway. By eight o'clock the whole of this wing was nearly burnt out. When I reached the end of the Rue Dauphin the red belches of flame were shooting out from the corner facing the private garden and the Rue de Rivoli. It was the Pavillon Marsan, containing the apartments occupied by the King of Prussia and his suite during the visit to Paris in the year of the great Exposition. A furious jet of flame was pouring out of the window at which Bismarck used to sit and smoke and look out on Paris and the Pari-

sians. There was a sudden crash. Was it an explosion or a fall of flooring that caused the great burst of fat black smoke and red sparks right in one's face? Who could tell what hell-devices might lurk within that blazing pile? It were well, surely, to keep at a respectful distance from it! And so I went eastwards to the Place du Palais Royal, which was still unsafe by reason of shot and shell from the neighbourhood of the Hôtel de Ville. Opposite was the great archway by which the troops of Napoleon had been wont to enter into the Place du Carrousel. Was the fire there yet? Just so far and no more. Could the archway be broken down, the Louvre, with its artistic and historic riches, might still be saved. But there was none to act or to direct. The Versaillist soldiers were lounging supine along the streets, intent—and who could blame the weary powder-grimed men?—on bread and wine. So the flames leaped on from window to window, from chimney to chimney. They were beyond the archway now: the Pavillon de la Bibliothèque was kindling—the connecting link between the Tuileries and the Louvre, built by the late Emperor to contain his private library. Unless an effort to stay the progress of the flames should be made, the Louvre and its inestimable contents were surely doomed. Indeed, the Louvre might be said to be on fire already, for the Pavillon de la Bibliothèque was counted a part of it. And on fire, too, were the Palais Royal, and the Hôtel de Ville where the rump of the Commune were cowering amidst their

arson; and the Ministry of Finance and many another public and private building. No wonder that Courbet, *soi-disant* Minister of Fine Arts, should have been sending far and wide among friends native and foreign, in quest of a refuge wherein to hide his head!

I turned, sad and sick, from the spectacle of wanton destruction, to be saddened and sickened yet further by another spectacle. Versaillist soldiers, hanging about the foot of the Rue St. Honoré, were enjoying the cheap amusement of Communist-hunting. The lower-class Parisians of civil life seemed to me caitiff and yet cruel to the last drop of their thin, sour, *petit bleu* blood. But yesterday they had been shouting "Vive la Commune!" and submitted to be under the heel of the said Commune. To-day they rubbed their hands with livid currish joy to have it in their power to denounce a Communard and to reveal his hiding-place. Very ardent in this pseudo-patriotic duty were the dear creatures of women. They knew the rat-holes into which the poor devils had squeezed themselves, and they guided the Versaillist soldiers to the spot with a fiendish glee. *Voilà* the braves of France, returned to such a triumph from an inglorious captivity! They have found him, then, the miserable! Yes, they have dragged him from out one of the purlieus which Haussmann had not time to sweep away, and a posse of them hem him round as they march him into the Rue St. Honoré. A tall, pale, hatless man, with something not ignoble in his bearing. His lower lip is trembling, but his brow is firm, and the

eye of him has some pride, and, indeed, scorn in it. "A veritable Communard?" I ask of my neighbour in the throng. "Questionable," is the reply; "I think he is a milk-seller to whom the woman who has denounced him owes a score." They yell, the crowd—my neighbour as loud as any—"Shoot him! shoot him!"—the demon-women of course the most clamorous. An arm goes up into the air; there are on it the stripes of a *sous-officier* and there is a stick in the fist at the end of the arm. The stick descends on the bare head of the pale prisoner. Ha! the infection has caught; men club their rifles and bring them down on that head, or smash them into splinters in their lust of murder. He is down; he is up again; he is down again—the thuds of the gun-stocks sounding on him just as when men beat a carpet with sticks. A momentary impulse prompts one to push into the *mêlée;* but it is foolish and it is useless. They are firing into the flaccid carcass now; thronging around it as it lies prone, like blow-flies on a piece of meat. Faugh! his brains are out and oozing into the gutter, whither the carrion is presently heaved bodily, to be trodden on and mangled presently by the feet of the multitude and the wheels of the gun-carriages. But, after all, womanhood was not quite dead in that band of bedlamites who had clamoured for the dead man's blood. There was one matron in hysterics who did not seem more than half drunk. Another with wan, scared face drew out of the press a child-bedlamite presumably her offspring, and, one might hope, went home

ashamed and shuddering. But surely for the time all manhood was dead in the soldiery of France to do such a deed as this. An officer—one with a bull-throat and the eyes of Algiers—stood by and looked on at the sport, smoking a cigar. A sharer in the crime surely he was if there was such a thing as discipline in the French ranks; if there was not he might have been pitied but for his smile of cynical approval.

The Commune was in desperate case; but it was dying hard, with dripping fangs bared and every blood claw protruded. It held no ground now west of the Boulevard Sevastopol from the river north to the Porte St. Denis. The Place Vendôme had been carried at two in the morning. After a desperate struggle the last man of its Communist garrison had been bayonetted on the great barricade at the junction of the Rue Royale with the Place de la Concorde, and the Versaillist masses could now gather undisturbed about the Madeleine. But how about the wild-cat leaders of the Commune still in possession of the Hôtel de Ville, on which the Versaillist batteries were now concentrating a fire heavy enough to be reckoned a bombardment? Their backs were to the wall, and they were fighting now, not for life—about that, to do them justice, they were reckless enough—but that they might work as much evil as might be possible before their hour should come. The Versaillists did not dare to make a quick ending by rushing straight on the barricades surrounding the open space about the Hôtel de Ville; they were timid about

explosions. But they were mining, sapping, burrowing, circumventing, breaking through party walls, and advancing from backyard to backyard; and it was a question of only a few hours when they should pierce the cordon. Meanwhile the holders of the Hôtel de Ville were pouring out death and destruction over Paris with indiscriminate malignity and fury. Now it was a bouquet of shells on the Champs Elysées; now a heavy obus crashing upon the already battered Boulevard Haussmann; now a great shell hurtling in the direction of the Avenue de la Reine Hortense. Cut off by this time from La Chapelle and the Gare du Nord, the reds still clung to a barricade in the Rue Lafayette near the Square Montholon. For its defenders the way of retreat was open towards Belleville. Canny folk, those Versaillists! The Prussians, no doubt, would have let them into Belleville from the rear, as they had already let them into La Chapelle. But Belleville, whether in front or from rear, scarcely offered a joyous prospect. It seemed to me that for days to come there might be fighting about that rugged and turbulent region, and that there, probably, the Commune would find its last ditch. As for the people in the Hôtel de Ville, they, in the expressive old phrase, were between the devil and the deep sea. One enemy with arms in his hands, was outside; another, fire—and fire kindled by themselves—was inside. Would they roast, or would they accept death at the bayonet-point? was the question I asked myself, as I left the soldiers stacking the corpses

on the flower-beds of the garden of the Tour St. Jacques and tried in vain to see something of the Hôtel de Ville from the Pont Neuf. Its face towards the river was hidden by a great blanket of smoke, through the opacity of which shot occasional flashes of red flame.

Farther westward the merry game of the morning was in full swing. Denouncement by wholesale had become the fashion, and denouncement and apprehension were duly followed by braining. It was a relief to quit the truculent cowards, and the bloody gutters, and the yelling women, and the Algerian-eyed officers. I strolled away into the Place Vendôme, of which there was current a story that it had been held for hours by twenty-five Communist men and one woman, against all that the Versaillists found it in their hearts to do. A considerable force had been massed in the Place: sentries were in charge of the ruins of the famous column. In the gutter before the Hôtel Bristol lay a corpse buffeted and besmirched—the corpse, I was told, of the Communist captain of the adjacent barricade, who had held it to the bitter end and had then shot himself. The Versaillist braves had made assurance doubly sure by shooting over and over again into the clay that was once a man. And in the Place there lay another corpse, that of the Hecate who fought on the Rue de la Paix barricade with a persistence and fury of which many spoke. They might have shot her—yes! when a woman takes to war she forfeits her immunities—but in memory of their mothers they might at least have drawn

her scanty rags over the bare limbs that now outraged decency, and refrained from abominable bayonet-thrusts.

And now here was the Rue Royale, burning right royally from end to end. Alas for the lovers of a draught of good British beer in this parching lime-kiln, the English beer-house at the corner of the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré was a heap of blazing ruins. Indeed, from that corner up to the Place de la Madeleine, there was scarcely a house on either side of the noble street that was not on fire. And the fire had been down the Rue St. Honoré and up the Faubourg, and was working its swift hot will along the Rue Boissy d'Anglas. It was hard to breathe in an atmosphere mainly of petroleum smoke. There was a sun, but its heat was dominated by the heat of the conflagrations; its rays were obscured by the lurid blue-black smoke that was rising with an unctuous fatness everywhere into the air, filling the eyes with acrid water, getting into the throat with a rank semi-asphyxiation, poisoning the sense of ordinary smell, and turning one's gorge with the abomination of it. All up the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré the gutters were full of blood; there was a barricade at every intersection; the house-fronts were scarred by shell-fire; and corpses lay about promiscuously. As I reached the gate leading into the forecourt of the British Embassy, the sight of a figure leaning against one of the pillars gave me a great shock. Why I should have been thus affected it is necessary to explain.

Neither my colleagues nor myself had been able to

get a scrap sent out of Paris since Monday morning; and it was now noon of Wednesday. It was not for pleasure or excitement that we were standing by the Commune's bloody death-bed; we were on duty. I was wretched. Here I was, on tenterhooks; witnessing, indeed, a momentous and memorable struggle; but the spectacle only useful professionally in order that I might with all speed transfer the pictures which had formed themselves on my mental retina to the columns of my newspaper, and thus make the world an early sharer with me in a knowledge of events on the phases and issue of which the world was hanging. This aim, this burning aspiration, must ever absorb the zealous correspondent, to the exclusion of any other consideration whatsoever. It is for the accomplishment of this purpose that he lives: I do not know that he ought to continue to do so if he fails—certainly not if he fails because of a miscarriage for which he himself is responsible. On the Tuesday night I could endure the blockade no longer. Somebody must get out, if he should descend the face of the enceinte by a rope. It was arranged that at sunrise on the Wednesday morning the attempt should be made by a colleague whose cool courage events had well tested, who had a good horse, knew Paris thoroughly, and had a large acquaintance among officers of the Versaillist army. He took charge of one copy of the scrappy letters which I had written in duplicate in the intervals of watching the fighting; we shook hands, wishing each other a good deliverance;

and at noon of Wednesday I was congratulating myself on the all but certainty that our letters were already somewhere about Amiens on the way to London.

This cheerful conviction was abruptly dissipated by the sight which caught my eye as I entered the Embassy courtyard. My unfortunate colleague was leaning against one of the pillars of the gate, deadly sick, his complexion positively green, his nerves utterly shattered. He had tried to get out—I doubt not, boldly and energetically; but he had failed. He had been fired upon and maltreated, he had been denounced as a Prussian spy, and had escaped death by the skin of his teeth. Poor fellow! He had been spattered with the blood and brains of denounced men who had not escaped. He had given up and had taken post where I found him, as the likeliest point at which to meet me and tell me of his failure.

Of course, as the consequence of that misfortune, it devolved upon me to make the attempt. I pondered a few moments, and then went into the chancellary of the Embassy, where I found Mr., afterwards Sir Edward Malet. Malet, who was then Second Secretary, had remained in Paris to represent Great Britain when Lord Lyons and the rest of the Embassy *personnel* had migrated to Versailles at the beginning of the Commune. He may be said to have been sitting among ruins, for the smash of the big house had been severe. In the garden walls were great gaps through which the Versaillists had worked their strategic progress round

the barricades, respecting much the wholeness of their skins. I had met Malet in the early days of the recent war, when he came out from Paris to Meaux with communications for Bismarck. I told him I meant to attempt getting out, and asked him whether I could take anything to Versailles for him.

"My dear fellow," said Malet, "it's not the least use your trying to get out. I sent two messengers off this morning; both have come back; both had been fired on. We must wait a day or two until things settle."

"I am going to try to-day, and immediately," was my answer. "You can help me and at the same time further your own objects. Put your despatches for Versailles into a big official envelope, seal it with the red seal, address it to 'Her Majesty the Queen of England,' and entrust me with the packet. No harm can come of it, anyhow."

After a little excogitation Malet complied; and, pocketing the envelope, I went to the stable where my little horse was standing at livery. The Communist sentry had relieved himself, and the embargo was off; but the poor beast, having been half-starved and long deprived of exercise, was in a state of great debility. However, I jogged gently along, meeting with no molestation until, on the Quay of Passy, I essayed a little trot, for time was of value. Presently the poor animal staggered and then fell on its side, pinning me down by the leg. I sickened, partly with pain, for I thought

my leg was broken; more, however, in the foreboding of failure to accomplish my purpose if this hurt had indeed befallen me. A line battalion of Versaillist troops was passing; and half-a-dozen soldiers were instantly around me. Some dragged the horse up on to his legs; others raised me and carried me into a wayside cabaret. A glass of wine revived me; my leg was not broken, only the ankle dislocated. I ordered and paid for half-a-dozen bottles of wine; my military friends carried me out and lifted me into the saddle; and I went on at a walk, thankful that I came so well out of the little disaster.

I encountered and surmounted sundry subsequent difficulties and dangers; but the crucial obstacle was still before me—at the Point du Jour Gate, whither I was making on my way to Versailles. Walking up and down on the pavement in front of the guard-house were a colonel and a major of the Line.

"No, it is impossible!" said the colonel. "Very sorry, but our orders are imperative. You must apply for a permit to Marshal MacMahon, whose quarters are at the École Militaire." I urged, I entreated, I produced my envelope; but all to no purpose. At length the colonel went away. The major remained, and was so good as to accept a cigar. On his breast was the British Crimean medal and on that hint I spoke yet again, dwelling on the old comradeship of the French and English soldiers during the days of fighting and hardship before Sevastopol. That medal he wore was

the Queen of England's souvenir: could he delay a courier carrying to her important despatches? The old warrior looked cautiously around; we were alone. He spoke no word, but silently, with his thumb over his shoulder pointed down the tunnel under the enceinte, at the further end of which was the open country. When I had passed the sentry at the exit I drew a long breath of relief and pottered on to Sèvres, at which place I left my horse and took carriage for Versailles, where my old war-time courier was residing in the despatch-service of the *Daily News* resident correspondent.

As I drove up the broad avenue between Viroflay and Versailles I overtook a very miserable and dejected company. In file after file of six abreast tramped a convoy of Communist prisoners, numbering over two thousand souls. Patiently and with some consciousness of pride they marched, linked tightly arm to arm. Among them were many women, some of them fierce barricade Hecates, others mere girls, soft and timid—here, seemingly, because a parent was here also. All were bareheaded and foul with dust, many powder-stained as well; and the burning sun beat down on the frowsy column. Not the sun only beat down, but also the flats of sabres wielded by the dashing Chasseurs d'Afrique who were the ruthless escort of those unfortunates. Their own recent experiences might have taught them humanity towards their captives. No sabre-blades had descended on their pates during that long

weary march from Sedan to their German captivity; they were then the prisoners of humane soldiers. But they were prisoners now no longer as they capered on their wiry barb stallions, and in their pride of cheap success belaboured unmercifully the miserables of the Commune. For any overwearied creatures who fell out or dropped there was short shrift: my driving-horse had been shying at the corpses on the road all the way from Sèvres. At the head of the sombre column were three or four hundred lashed together with ropes—all powder-stained those—and among them not a few men in red breeches—deserters taken red-handed. I rather wondered what they did in this gang; they might as well have died fighting on the barricades as survive to be made targets of a day or two later with their backs against a wall.

To hand Malet's despatches to the First Secretary of the Embassy, Mr. Sackville West, and to eat a morsel, did not detain me in Versailles beyond half an hour; and then I was off again on wheels by the circuitous route through Rueil and Malmaison, and over the pontoon bridge above Argenteuil to St. Denis and the railway. As I drove along the green margin of the placid Seine, the spectacle which the capital presented can never fade from my memory. On its white houses the sun still shone; he did not withhold his beams in spite of the deeds they illumined. But up through the sunbeams struggled and surged ghastly swart waves and folds and pillars of dense smoke. Ha! there was a

sharp crack, and then came a dull thud on the air. No gun-fire that, but some great explosion which must have rocked a district almost to its base. Then there rose with a jet-like spurt, a convolvulus-shaped column of white smoke, such as men describe when Vesuvius bursts into eruption; then it broke up into fleecy waves and eddied away towards the horizon all round, as the ripple of a stone into a pool spreads to the water's edge. The crowds of German soldiers who sat by the Seine steadily watching were startled into a burst of excitement. The excitement well might have been world-wide. "Paris the beautiful" was now Paris the ghastly, Paris the battered, Paris the blood-drenched. And this in the present century—ay, but four-and-twenty years ago—Europe professing civilisation, France boasting of culture and refinement, Frenchmen braining one another with the butt-ends of their rifles, and Paris blazing to the skies! There needed but a Nero to fiddle.

Travelling to England, and writing hard all the way in train and boat, I reached London on the early morning of Thursday, May 25th, and was back in Paris the following day. All was then virtually over. The hostages in La Roquette had been shot, and the Hôtel de Ville had fallen on the afternoon of the day I had left. When I returned the Communists were at their last gasp in the Château d'Eau, the Buttes de Chaumont, and Père-Lachaise. On the afternoon of the 28th, after just one week of fighting, Marshal MacMahon announced, "I am absolute master of Paris." On the

following morning I visited Père-Lachaise, where the very last shots had been fired. Bivouac fires had been fed with the souvenirs of pious sorrow, and the trappings of woe had been torn down to be used as bedclothes. But there had been no great amount of fighting in the cemetery itself. An infallible token of close and heavy firing are the dents of many bullets, and of those there were comparatively few in Père-Lachaise. Shells, however, had fallen freely, and the results were occasionally very ghastly. But the ghastliest sight in Père-Lachaise was in the south-eastern corner, where, close to the boundary wall, there had been a natural hollow. The hollow was now filled up by dead. One could measure the dead by the rood. There they lay, tier above tier, each successive tier powdered over with a coating of chloride of lime—two hundred of them patent to the eye, besides those underneath hidden by the earth covering layer after layer. Among the dead were many women. There, thrown up in the sunlight, was a well-rounded arm with a ring on one of the fingers; there, again, was a bust shapely in death. And yonder were faces which to look upon made one shudder —faces distorted out of humanity with ferocity and agony combined. The ghastly effect of the dusty white powder on the dulled eyes, the gnashed teeth, and the jagged beards, cannot be described. How died those men and women? Were they carted hither and laid out in this dead-hole of Père-Lachaise? Not so: the hole had been replenished from close by. Just

yonder was where they were posted up against that section of pock-pitted wall—there was no difficulty in reading the open book—and were shot to death as they stood or crouched. Let us turn our backs on the awful and melancholy scene, and pray that never again may the civilised world witness such a week of horrors as Paris underwent in those sunshiny summer days of May, 1871!

VII.

OUR PARISH MURDERER.

SINCE the days of my youth—now, alas! very remote—I have lost touch in a great measure of the quiet northern region in which I was born and reared. Many things, which in my young days were regarded in that once simple and primitive community as surprising novelties, have, no doubt, long since passed into the category of things of course, or even in their turn have fallen obsolete. But forty-five years ago our parish, primitive as it was, possessed an unique if sinister distinction. Among its inhabitants there lived, and moved, and had his being, a completely authenticated and, indeed, self-acknowledged murderer. His long-planned and deliberate crime had been perpetrated in our midst. I myself saw the stain of blood on the sand of the roadside just in front of the wayside smithy; there had been an actual witness of the act, who was ready and, indeed, eager with damning testimony; the doer of the deed never wagged his tongue in defence of his guilt, and when it pleased him to do so confessed his blood-guiltiness with perfect frankness. Yet when, a few years after the grim transaction, I went

out into the world from my native valley, this local murderer of ours was living there in complete immunity, earning his bread in rural labour among his fellow men, unshunned by them as a pariah, and held in all respects save for occasional lapses into unconvivial inebriety, a not discreditable member of the sequestered and primitive community.

I never made a boast of it, because I did not consider the *trouvaille* as anything to be greatly proud of; but, as a matter of fact it was I who found him. I did so on the morning after one of the half-yearly "feeing" markets in Rottenslough, a village about six miles from our valley. Our parish post-office was about a mile from the manse, and it was one of the pleasant duties which my father the minister devolved on me, to ride the old pony there every morning and bring back the manse letter-bag. Doing so on the morning after this Rottenslough market day, in the deep wayside ditch near the cross-roads I found an upturned old gig in an advanced state of smash. Broken and battered though it was, I knew it at a glance as the rattletrap appertaining to Sandy Grant, the drunken farmer of Bodenfinnoch. The horse apparently had kicked himself free, and since he was nowhere to be seen, had probably gone home to his stable. Sandy himself, with a strange man by his side, was slumbering sweetly in the clover of the field beyond the ditch. In answer to my hail, he sat up, rubbing his eyes and yawning with great vigour. "Whaur am I?" was his

ingenuous question. Informed on this point, and his attention directed to the fragmentary condition of his vehicle, he swore with extreme fervour, and protested that the "wyte" of his mischance was wholly due to his still slumbering companion, who, it appeared, had on the previous evening "made him blin' fou'" in one of the booths on the market stance. This companion he incontinently proceeded to kick with great emphasis, a process which ultimately succeeded in arousing the strange man, whom Sandy swore he "didna ken frae Adam."

Sandy's tempter and boon companion, as he rose to his feet and stared around him, was a person of singular aspect. Hair and beard—and he had a good deal of both—were coal-black, and his strong-lined face—as I supposed naturally swarthy—was tanned so deeply that the skin might have been leather. His eyes were small, black, and keen. He was of fair stature, and carried his head well; but, although his shoulders were square as one looked at him in front, they were so rounded at the back that it almost seemed as if he had a hump. When he moved he lifted his feet in a curious dragging fashion, as if they or his boots were too heavy for him to move in the ordinary way. Years after when visiting the Cascade Prison at Hobart in Tasmania, I saw the convict lunatics remaining from the transportation times, whose backs had been humped by countless lashes and whose ankles had been clogged for years with heavy irons at Norfolk

Island and Port Arthur; and there came back to me then the vivid memory of this strange casual incomer into our valley, as I first saw him on this morning slouching in the clover-field by the cross-roads of Black-hillock.

Hospitable Sandy Grant took this chance companion of his home to breakfast. A few days later I saw the "foreigner," as some of the neighbours had begun to call him, driving one of Bodenfinnoch's carts from the moss with a load of peat. It appeared that he had taken service temporarily with Sandy as odd, or, as it used to be called among us, "orra" man, quietly remarking that he did not particularly care where he lived so long as he was able to earn an honest living. And he had thought proper to give some account of himself. His name, it appeared, was David Morgan; he was, he said, a Welshman by birth; he had been a slate-quarrier at Bethesda, near Bangor, and later had been navvying on a railway in the north of France. It seemed that he had come north in quest of a brother who had come bridge-building somewhere into Aberdeenshire, but that the search had come to nothing. His money was done; he was tired of tramping; he liked oatmeal—the simple fare of our valley; and so, now he was there, he was content to stop.

I think he was for some six months "orra" man at Bodenfinnoch. Then he struck out into independence, constructed for himself a hovel of turf on the muirland of Knockans, and undertook piecework as a ditcher

and drainer. When that work was slack he was in the habit of working on the neighbouring farm of Coldhome, the tenant of which was an old man named Macdonald, who had for housekeeper a middle-aged woman whom we knew as Mrs. Trevallack. Life went on so quietly in this sequestered parish of ours that the history of this woman, as it was known among us, was quite a world's wonder in a small way. She was a south country woman, who, it seemed, had been married to a Cornish man named Trevallack, a private soldier of our local Highland regiment. Trevallack had died on service in India, and (so the story went) she had been fallen in love with by a man named Macdonald, who was a sergeant in the regiment and was the son of the old farmer of Coldhome. He could not marry her, because the married strength of the regiment was full and there were many applicants in front of him. So he sent her home to the care of his father, who was a widower; promising that in a few years when the regiment in its turn should come home, he would buy his discharge, marry her, and settle down on the farm. But war after war—in Afghanistan, in Gwalior, in the Punjaub—had detained the regiment in India. The Scottish sergeant had been for several years its regimental sergeant-major; and, if he had desired, while fighting and promotion were the order of the day he could not have bought his discharge. While the regiment remained in India, Mrs. Trevallack had been living among us now for nearly twelve years, waiting

patiently for the happy time of which she steadfastly professed her assurance, tending the old farmer faithfully, managing, as far as a woman might, the details of the work of the sour upland farm, and bearing a good repute in the parish as a worthy and courageous woman. It was reported now that her long expectancy was soon to have a happy ending. The term for which Macdonald had enlisted was rapidly drawing to a close; and, in the joy of her heart Mrs. Trevallack made no secret of the knowledge which had come to her, that the gallant soldier for whom she had waited so patiently all those long years would reach home in the course of a few weeks.

That time soon passed. One cold November evening my father was driving home from a meeting of Presbytery, and I was his companion in the old gig which he had bought when he married my mother. As we came round a sharp turn in the road the mare shied violently at the blaze of light streaming across the road from the windows and open door of Wullie Watt's smithy. On the open space outside was visible in the glow of light a group of men and women from the neighbouring cottages. They were silent, as is the wont of Scottish country folk in the actual presence of calamity; but the white blaze from the forge illuminated the horror that possessed every face. From inside the smithy the sound was heard of sobs and moans, broken intermittently by heart-piercing wails. "The minister!" "The minister!" came in low tones from the group as

the light fell on my father's face. Old Geordie Riach of the Rashes, the elder of the district, came forward, doffing his broad bonnet and so baring his grand old head, and said in a hoarse whisper: "It's murder, your Reverence—rank bluidy murder, dune here barely ten minutes syne; an' the murdered man—ye kirstened him yersel', sir—gane tae his account i' the twinklin' o' an e'e. For God's sake, sir, tak' tent"—the minister was alighting—"tak' tent, sir, or ye'll step intae the puddle o' his life's bluid!"

I followed my father and his venerable elder into the smithy. Right in the blaze from the forge, on a couple of sacks which had been hurriedly spread, lay the stark, motionless form of a tall, powerfully-built man, the strongly-marked face livid in the pallor of the white light. At a glance my father recognised the dead man, whom in childhood he had baptised, in youth had prepared for his first communion, in early manhood had bidden God-speed when he left the parish to take the Queen's shilling and join the old corps in whose ranks had served many of the good old stock to which he belonged. The head of the dead soldier lay in the lap of Mrs. Trevallack, whose tears were raining down on the fast-setting face; whose moans and wails it was that we had heard while yet outside on the road and that we still listened to as we looked down upon her and her dead.

"Who hath done this?" asked my father in his solemn tones of quiet authority.

The woman looked up, dashed the tears from her streaming eyes, and between her bursting sobs replied in her south country Scots:—

"I met Macdonald at the cross-roads whaur the coach passes. We traivelt thegither through the moss an' ower the muir. Juist as we gaed by the smiddy here Dauvit Morgan, the foreign ditcher, dairted oot frae the gable end an' gae Macdonald ae strong stab in the breist wi' a lang knife. Oh, sir, but I saw the cruel flash o't i' the munelight as he drove it hame! He left it stickin'. See, sir, it's in my man's heart still! An' syne, withoot a word, the murderin' villain sprang the hedge on the far side o' the road, an' got clean awa'!"

Before midnight the rural policeman made his appearance, and remained in charge of the body until, in the small hours of the morning, arrived from Rottenslough Neil Robertson, the superintendent of police for the county. He authorised the removal of the dead man to his father's house, whither came, before the short winter day was done, the Procurator Fiscal from the county town; and this functionary of justice promptly set about the "taking of precognitions"—the Scottish legal expression for the preliminary examination of persons whose evidence might be found relevant. The only witness to the actual deed was the woman Trevallack, who positively testified to David Morgan as the murderer. She knew him well, since from time to time he worked on old Macdonald's farm; and when he did

so, he took his meals in the farmhouse and was served by herself. She further testified that Morgan was actually in the kitchen of Coldhome when she set out to meet the returning sergeant-major, and that he was the only person to whom she mentioned the errand on which she was leaving home. Asked whether she was aware of any reason that could have actuated Morgan to take the life of the sergeant-major, she deposed that she had sometimes thought Morgan had, in her own words, "ta'en a notion" of herself, but owned that this was merely an impression on her part. Outside of Mrs. Trevallack's direct testimony, the circumstantial evidence collected by the Procurator Fiscal against Morgan was not in itself of great strength. Wullie Watt the blacksmith deposed that "the foreigner," as Morgan was commonly called, had been in the smithy in the course of the "forenicht," but had left quite half an hour before Mrs. Trevallack's scream of horror was heard out in the road. But every rural smithy in the north of Scotland was in those days the evening gossiping-place of the countryside; and the blacksmith testified that "the foreigner" was among the habitual frequenters of the place. Several people on the evening of the murder had met Morgan, apparently on his way home to his hovel on the muir, and had exchanged with him a word of greeting in the by-passing. None had observed in him anything "by ordnar," and none could approximately specify the time of meeting him.

Morgan had been apprehended in the early morning after the night of the murder, and had been straightway carried to the county jail. The police had found him sleeping calmly in his hovel; and when awakened he had evinced no sign of perturbation. A smart young local solicitor volunteered to undertake his defence; and, under his advice the prisoner declined the offer made to him by the Procurator Fiscal that he should, in Scottish legal phraseology, "emit a declaration"—in other words, make a statement on his own behalf. He lay in the county jail for some months, and then was removed to Aberdeen to stand his trial there before the Circuit Court, which corresponds to the English Assizes. The bloody tragedy in our quiet sequestered valley had thrilled the whole north country; and within the memory of man the old Court House of the good city of Bon Accord had never been so crowded as on the morning when David Morgan was brought into the dock between two prison-warders to stand his trial for the wilful murder of ex-Sergeant-Major John Macdonald.

A judge of the stern old school was on the bench. The prosecution by the Crown was conducted by the Senior Advocate Depute, the best criminal lawyer of his day in Scotland. The prisoner had no means wherewith to secure the services of an advocate of high standing at the Scottish bar; but his solicitor had retained for the defence a young advocate, Mr. Daner, whom he knew to be a man of great ability and who later rose

to high eminence in his profession. My father had come into town to be present at a trial in which folk of his own parish were deeply concerned; and young as I was, I had a seat by his side in the body of the court.

Of the details of the initial legal proceedings I have not retained any close recollection, nor of the quaint old-world phraseology which I remember to have found bewildering; but I do remember wondering why the prisoner was uniformly spoken of as the "panel." In my recollection the indictment was read, after which the Counsel for the Crown briefly and temperately opened the case for the prosecution and promptly proceeded to call his witnesses. Those taken first, and I thought this strange, were people who gave merely circumstantial evidence—the old blacksmith and the men who had met Morgan on his way home. Then Margaret Trevallack was placed in the witness-box. She wore mourning, her once comely face was now deeply worn, but her bearing was firm and composed. The evidence she gave in answer to the questions of the Crown Counsel was in effect the same as that which had been embodied in the precognitions taken by the Procurator Fiscal. She swore positively to Morgan as the murderer of Macdonald. She had distinctly seen his face, and it was simply impossible that she could have been mistaken. Her evidence was given with a quiet force of conviction which justly created a powerful impression on the crowded court.

Then Mr. Daner rose to cross-examine the woman who confronted him so impassively.

"You say you are a widow, Mrs. Trevallack?" he began.

"Ay, sir," was the quiet answer.

"Who and what was your husband?"

"Willam Trevallack, a private in the Abernethy Highlanders."

"Where and when did you lose him?"

"He died of cholera at Kurnaul in India, twal' year ago last January."

"Have you any paper to prove your marriage and your husband's death?"

"No, sir. A box in which I keepit my papers was stolen frae me on the voyage hame frae India."

"Of what country was your husband?"

"A Cornishman, he tells me; frae the south-west o' England—a miner tae trade."

"That will do, Mrs. Trevallack," said Mr. Daner suavely, as he resumed his seat. The woman had perceptibly paled under his quiet and brief cross-examination, and I noticed her upper lip tremble more than once; but she maintained her calm, sad composure, and left the witness-box with a respectful curtsey to the judge.

The Advocate Depute stated that Mrs. Trevallack's evidence completed the case for the Crown, and Mr. Daner rose to address the Court for the defence. He spoke as unemotionally as if he had been arguing in a dry commercial suit, and his quiet measured manner

seemed to send a chill through the audience. In half-a-dozen sentences he brushed aside as futile and feeble the circumstantial evidence adduced on the part of the prosecution. "Practically," said he, "in this case the Crown has cited but a single witness. I will not pause to argue whether a conviction could legally or justly follow on the evidence of a single witness who confessedly caught a mere glimpse of the face of the murderer of Macdonald, whoever he may be. I simply proceed to destroy the case for the Crown by informing the jury that the testimony which has just been uttered by Margaret Trevallack is wholly inadmissible, and must be expurgated from the record. And this, my lord and gentlemen of the jury, because the said Margaret Trevallack is no widow, as she perjured herself by swearing in your hearing that she is; and further, and of far more importance, because"—here Mr. Daner paused for a moment in the midst of a silence so dead that a pin-fall could have been heard; then he quietly resumed: "because the said Margaret Trevallack is the wife of the panel; and it is a principle of our law that a wife cannot give evidence against her husband."

The scene was indescribable. The silence in which the young advocate had been speaking was broken, as he ended, by an universal gasp of utter astonishment. The judge himself evinced a most unwonted excitement; the audience simply seethed in a paroxysm of surprise. Three men only remained unmoved: the prisoner, his counsel, and his solicitor. Mrs. Trevallack had fainted

dead away and was being carried out of court by the people about her. The "crier" called for "Silence!" at the judge's command, and Mr. Daner quietly resumed:—

"It only remains that I prove the truth of the statement which I have made to the satisfaction of your lordship and of the jury. I produce a certificate of the marriage of Margaret Alison of Maybole, Ayrshire, spinster; and William Trevallack of Camborne, Cornwall, private in the Abernethy Regiment of Royal Highlanders, celebrated at Cawnpore, India, and duly dated and authenticated. I produce a certified copy obtained from the Adjutant-General's office, of the sentence of a general court-martial held at Kurnaul in the Upper Province of Bengal on January 9, 1836, upon No. 4,130 Private William Trevallack of the Abernethy Regiment of Royal Highlanders, convicted for assaulting and beating on parade his superior officer Sergeant John Macdonald of the same regiment, and sentenced to be discharged from the service and transported to Botany Bay for ten years. I produce original of warrant issued by the Superintendent of Convicts at Port Jackson, New South Wales, dated January 9, 1846, certifying that William Trevallack late of the Abernethy Highlanders had duly served his allotted sentence of ten years' transportation and was now a free man, at liberty to leave the colony for whatever destination he might choose. And finally I call John Parry, late warder in Paramatta Prison near Port Jackson, to swear to the

identity of the panel, who for reasons of his own with which we have no concern has chosen to call himself David Morgan, with the ex-convict William Trevallack, of whom he had charge when Trevallack worked in his chain-gang, engaged in road-making in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales in the years 1844—45. Call John Parry!"

John Parry, a tall, grizzle-bearded veteran, entered the box and curtly identified the prisoner. Cross-examined for the Crown, he read from his note-book the particulars of sundry marks, scars, and mutilations on the prisoner's person which an examination would reveal. Two surgeons from the audience volunteered to make the examination, furnished with a copy of the ex-warder's particulars. Returning into court with the prisoner after a short absence, they testified on oath that they had found on his body all the evidences of identification which Parry had specified. Mr. Daner then claimed that he had completely proved every link in the chain of identification of the panel as the husband of the woman who in the witness-box had falsely sworn that he was dead and that she was his widow. He added that since the direct evidence inculpating him as the murderer of Macdonald had failed and was of no avail for the cause charged and proven, and since the circumstantial evidence was clearly of no account, his client was entitled to a finding of "Not guilty" at the hands of the jury.

The judge, however, demurred to this demand. In

his judgment the persons concerned with conducting the defence of the prisoner, knowing what they knew, had not done their best by their client. Whether they had in a measure sacrificed him to an anxiety for a sensational *dénouement* or not, he would not pretend to say. The witness Margaret Trevallack should have been challenged as soon as she entered the witness-box, and the reason which rendered her evidence inadmissible should have been at once brought forward as the justification of the challenge. Instead of this, she had been allowed to give her evidence, and that evidence must have impressed the jury, as he confessed it had impressed himself. Legally, it was true that it was not good evidence, but nevertheless the serious tenor of it remained with him, and, he doubted not, with the jury also. In the exercise of his discretion he would direct the jury to bring in a finding of "Not proven."

The verdict of "Not proven," which the Scottish law permits, is in the nature of a compromise—when the person on his trial has not succeeded in proving his innocence of the offence laid to his charge, and when, nevertheless, the evidence does not warrant the finding of "Guilty." The jury after an absence from court for a few minutes, returned with the verdict the fitness of which had been impressed upon them by the judge.

Mrs. Trevallack never returned to our glen, and I never heard what became of her. Her husband came

back among us to his bothy on the muir. A week later, on a Saturday evening, he presented himself at Wullie Watt's smithy. The rustic congregation around the forge rather drew away from him, and old Wullie frankly told him that he was not welcome there. Trevallack, or Morgan, as he was still mostly called, replied that he had no intention or desire to intrude; but that now that he had undergone his trial—I think the old Scots legal expression is "tholed his assize"—and could not be tried again, he would fain be permitted to tell his story to the folk who had come to know him as a good comrade and harmless fellow, and whose goodwill, come what might, he was loth to lose. The vote of the smithy-parliament was in favour of his being allowed to deliver himself, and the manse grieve, who was among the auditors, brought me the gist of the strange tale.

Trevallack, it seemed, while the regiment was quartered in Kurnaul, had reason to suspect Sergeant Macdonald of paying undue attention to his wife, had words with him, and finally gave him a thrashing. For this assault on a superior officer the sergeant dared not in the circumstances report him; but, in his spite against him subjected him to a course of tyranny which ultimately became intolerable, till at length in an ungovernable fury of despair, Trevallack struck down the sergeant on regimental parade in face of the commanding officer. He was fortunate to have escaped the death-sentence, although at the time, he said, he would have preferred being shot, and so ending the misery of his

life; for he was certain Macdonald had deliberately ruined him because of his passion for the private soldier's wife. As he sailed down the Bay of Bengal to his ten years of living death in New South Wales, he swore unto himself an oath that if he lived to regain his freedom, he would never rest until he had slain the man who had doubly wrecked his life. The long years passed, and his pass of emancipation was in his pocket as he stood on the shore of Port Jackson and looked seaward between Sydney Heads. He worked his passage to Calcutta and painfully and slowly travelling up country, found indeed the old regiment at Umballa, but no Sergeant Macdonald was now serving in it. He had been promoted to sergeant-major, the old soldiers told the tramp, whom, after his ten years of hardship and harsh discipline in the Australian chain-gang, they did not recognise; but who knew them yet refrained from revealing himself. Macdonald had some time previously been detached on some special staff-duty, whither Trevallack could not discover. The orderly-room clerk could not enlighten him; but from that functionary he ascertained the name of the Highland parish of which Macdonald was a native, and also the date at which would expire the term of service for which he had enlisted. Then he learned from an old married woman of the regiment—who knew him not, although he and his wife had lived in Kurnaul next room to her, and who wondered why this stranger tramp wanted the information—that after Private Trevallack was transported

eleven years gone, Sergeant Macdonald had sent that poor fellow's wife to Scotland to live in his father's house until such time as the regiment should go home, and he then be able to buy his discharge. As for Trevallack, everybody held him as good as dead when he was carried down country in irons to be shipped to Australia.

In Macdonald's native parish, then, Trevallack had concluded, was the place where he could be most surely marked down; and thither by slow degrees and devious ways he betook himself, changing his name and his place of origin. No more than had his old comrades did the woman who really was his wife recognise in the bowed and clumsy Welsh stranger her Cornish husband of the long bygone time in Kurnaul. Unconsciously the wretched woman set him on the track of his enemy whom she loved. It was he, and none other, who had struck Macdonald to the heart out yonder in the road, as the man who had ruined his life neared him with an arm round the waist of the woman of whom the ex-sergeant had robbed him, the victim of his tyrannic malevolence; nor did he repent the deed. He had resolved to avow it in the dock and go to the gallows with a light heart, now that he had taken his revenge. But the young solicitor who had come to him in the county gaol represented to him that, having regard to the long cruel provocation and suffering he had endured, what he had done was, in the title of an old book, "Killing no Murder," and that it behoved him to make a fight

for life. They all knew what had been the result. He would very fain be allowed to stay among them, since he had no friends elsewhere; he would not obtrude himself so long as they would just pass him the "Good day." But if they shunned him for the blood on his hands, he would go away out into the hard world.

There was an interval of silence. Then Wullie Watt, baring his old head, said solemnly, "What saith the Book, 'Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.' Ye've been a sinfu' man, an' a bluidthirsty man, William Trevallack; but ye've been sair tried and sair vranged; and here is my haun'!"

END OF VOL. I.